

# Notes and gleanings

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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

### FEDERAL.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL BANK.

The difficulties regarding the state-treaty between Switzerland and the other nations which is necessary for the establishment of the International Bank at Basle have found an elegant solution at the second Hague Conference. As all Swiss State-Treaties of a longer duration than 15 years are subject to the Referendum it seemed originally that the secure establishment of the International Bank would have to be delayed during the 90 days' period in which a popular vote for the acceptance or rejection of the treaty may be demanded by referendum. At the Hague it has now been decided to enter into two identical treaties, one for 15 years, for which period the referendum does not apply, and one for permanent duration. The Federal Government will submit both treaties to Parliament for ratification. While the permanent treaty will be in suspense for three months allowed for the referendum, the Bank's establishment is in any case secured for the period of fifteen years. The double treaty is really only a formality as no one anticipates that a Referendum will be demanded. But even if it should be demanded the probability that the treaty might be rejected by the popular vote is nil.

#### THE FASCIST ACCUSATION AGAINST SWITZERLAND.

The Federal Attorney General has submitted a detailed report to the Federal Council on the anti-fascist activities recently revealed in Paris, Brussels and Geneva which have caused the Italian Press to launch such violent attacks on the Swiss authorities for alleged neglect of their duties regarding the protection of the delegates to the League of Nations. The report gives the alleged plot against the Italian delegation a much less dangerous aspect than the Italian papers would have it. Berneri has been arrested in Brussels not for plotting but merely because he used false identity papers. How he and others gold hold of forged Swiss passports will be investigated. Our authorities have been watching Berneri's movements for several months and taken all the precautions required. On receipt of further information the Federal Government will more fully consider the unpleasant situation that has arisen owing to the Italian accusations.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

The oldest living male citizen of Zurich is 94 years old. There are altogether 10 veterans of 90 and more years, and the report adds that, while 9 are widowers, "one is not yet married!"

A motion has been put to the Zurich Town Council to budget Fr. 10,000 pro 1930 for the furtherance of literature. Z.

#### BERNE.

As the nomination of Mr. Minger to the Federal Council has left a seat vacant on the Board of the Federal Bank, Mr. G. Gnägi, a member of the national council, has been requested to fill the post for the remainder of the current period. J.G.

A terrible tragedy has occurred at Thun. A working-man killed himself with his army rifle after first attempting to shoot his daughter with a revolver. Fortunately the girl escaped without injuries.

The motive for the tragedy seems to be that the father did not like the idea of his daughter, who was engaged, leaving him. T.G.

#### THE END OF A LEGEND.

The *Tribune de Genève* reports the following story: In the Bernese Oberland it is considered as an established fact that neither the lake of Thun nor the lake of Brienz have ever been frozen. A correspondent of the "*Bund*" however has found in a Bible of the 16th century a notice which shows that there is an error.

The notice which appears in a very archaic German reads: "A historical event happened in the year of grace 1685. The lake of Thun was

frozen to such an extent that horse drawn carriages and sledges were circulating on the ice. On the 26th day there was a severe earthquake and on the same day a heavy fall of snow covered the fields which lasted for a day and a night."

#### GLARUS.

Various outbreaks of fire in Elm, apparently due to arson, have agitated the inhabitants of the villages which consist mostly of wooden houses. A 28 years old woman was suspected and has owned her guilt. She was found to be insane and was removed to safety. St. G.

#### ZUG.

In Blickensdorf near Baar Mrs. L. Kälin showed her husband and her 21 years old son a revolver, which somebody had given to her. As the son took the weapon into his hands, there was a detonation and Mrs. Kälin collapsed mortally wounded. Z.

#### BASLE.

The Hague Conference has definitely decided on Basle as the seat of the International Reparations Bank. N.

#### ST. GALL.

The embroidery export in 1929 was 21 million francs less in value than in 1928. Z.

#### THURGAU.

Thanks to the perseverance of Prof. Dr. Leutenegger the Kantonsschule at Frauenfeld possesses now an astronomical observatory. Z.

#### GRISONS.

The Federal Council has authorised the Department of Political Economy to refund to the canton two thirds of the help granted in 1929 to vintners, up to a maximum of Fr. 12,000. This aid was given chiefly to the vintners in the Misox, as their vineyards suffered great damage from the severe winter. St. G.

#### ON A GOLDEN LUGE.

I gather that one of the most resplendent figures at St. Moritz this year is Lady Oppenheimer, wife of the South African magnate, Sir Ernest Oppenheimer.

Lady Oppenheimer and her suite caused a sensation to begin with by arriving in Switzerland in the private railway coach of the President of the French Republic. This is apparently the only private coach in France, and it is hired out to those who care to pay for it.

Then, they tell me, Lady Oppenheimer proceeds over the snow on a golden luge.

Be that as it may, she won the prize at the fancy dress dance at the Carlton, in a 1780 costume of unparalleled magnificence.

#### SKIERS IN AN AVALANCHE.

Three young skiers of Zillis, in the Canton of Grisons, were making an excursion on the Piz Beverin (9,849-ft.) when they were struck by an avalanche which swept them towards a precipice.

On the brink of the abyss they struck against a rock, to which they clung desperately while the rest of the avalanche thundered by. Their skis being smashed to splinters, they struggled on foot through the snow, which was sometimes up to their arm-pits, until they reached the valley in a state of exhaustion.

#### VALAIS.

The electorate had recently to decide on a credit of Fr. 700,000 for the construction of gas works estimated to cost Fr. 1,400,000 which is to provide gas for the communes of Sierre, Chalais, Chippis and Montana. The credit has been voted for by a large majority and one of the most modern plants will be erected in due course. J.G.

#### VAUD.

When making the customary round of inspection, the police of Rolle have found eight fishermen from Savoy who were throwing nets within 2 or 3 km of the Swiss shore. Sixty nets have been confiscated as well as 9 trout which have been given to the Hospital at Rolle. Bonne appétit!

#### FROM THE TICINO.

##### GOTTHARD RAILWAY.

To avoid the possibility of danger and recurring interruption of the line, at Arbiedo, due to abnormal quantities of earth and stones brought down by the mountain torrent coming from the avalanche region of Mount Arbedo, the Federal Railways have planned a deviation of the line, for a distance of about 1½ kilometers. After leaving the station of Bellinzona the new line would proceed closer to the mountain and would

(continued in next column)

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

### Switzerland is Getting Safer:

*Evening News*, 13th Jan.

More than 2,000 people returning from the winter sports in Switzerland arrived at Victoria Station last night. Five boat trains were run from the coast instead of the usual two.

Many business men returned, while bright mufflers showed that hundreds of undergraduates had come back to start a new term this week. Boys from the public schools, however, will have a few days longer in the snow.

More people returned than on the corresponding day last year, yet there were far fewer casualties.

There were some who limped or hobbled along, and some who had their arms in slings, while faces adorned with sticking plaster were plentiful. But there was not one cot case.

A Southern Railway official said that it seemed as if conditions had been less dangerous this season or that British winter sportsmen were learning to take more care of themselves.

Last year ambulances met several of the boat trains, but this season they were not required.

Doctors at Swiss resorts always look forward to a rich harvest at this time of the year, and they are rarely disappointed. A few people who should have returned are still in Switzerland under doctors' orders.

Customs officials were kept busy examining the luggage which had been registered through from Switzerland, and the passengers by the earlier divisions of the boat train had long waits before their luggage could be cleared.

I particularly like the last paragraph in the above article, the one about the very long delay at the Customs at Victoria Station. I take it that among those returned from Switzerland on that day were to be found a great number of members of the English Upper Classes, i.e., people who may have some "pull" with the Powers that be and who, having felt terribly vexed over that delay and having thought, perchance, also how utterly futile and stupid such Customs Barriers are, may have learnt something.

But, if Switzerland is getting safer—and to my mind, Switzerland has always been *The Safest Spot* in the world, except for the foolhardy and the swaggerers—may we not feel some grateful remembrance when reading the following tribute to our Guides?

### Bold Climbers of the A'ps:

*Evening Telegraph and Post*, Dundee, 4th Jan.

More and more people each year seem to be seeking recreation on the Continent, either because the summers here are not warm enough or the winters not cold enough.

At the present moment hundreds of English and probably a few lucky Scots are disporting themselves amid the snow and ice of Switzer-

### Home News—(Continued)

cut through the alluvial cone of the torrent by way of a tunnel about 370 yards long. The railway line will be considerably improved as regards gradients and curves and the goods station of Bellinzona will have more elbow-room. The work is estimated to cost about 3 million francs and to take a year to carry out.

### CENTENARY OF CANTONAL CONSTITUTION.

As this year occurs the centenary of the adoption of the constitution, under which the Ticino has lived, with minor amendments, for the past hundred years, a committee of the leading politicians has decided to commemorate the event by holding a special meeting of the Grand Council on the 5th of July next. In addition, a book on historical developments with special attention to constitutional law will be issued and special tuition on matters connected with the constitution will be given in all the schools of the Canton.

### EXHIBITION OF ITALIAN ART.

The Swiss visiting the Exhibition of Italian Old Masters at Burlington House should not omit to pay some attention to the works (seven of them) by Bernardino Luini of Lugano, perhaps the best painter the Ticino has ever produced. His "*A Boy with a Puzzle*" is supposed to be the best painting of a boy in existence, and several others of his works are much appreciated. I do not know whether there are paintings by other Ticinesi, but then my knowledge of the world of art is rather meagre. O.B.

land, and enjoying all the healthy excitement of vigorous and energetic winter sports.

They are not likely to find any class of the people they are living among more interesting or more admirable than the hardy race of Swiss guides, the physically perfect and adventure-some group of men who risk life and limb in taking bold climbers to the peaks of the Alps.

By himself the professional is safe enough, but it is when for the sum of twelve or twenty pounds he agrees to conduct a mere novice to the topmost summit of the Matterhorn that the dangers really begin.

By himself the guide takes no risks. From youth upwards he has been rubbing elbows with danger. Experience has produced in him a curious pliability of the feet, which can find support on slanting surfaces without undue fatigue to the calves of the legs.

The average man used to walking with his feet on a flat surface, finds this excessively tiring. Just try it, and then imagine climbing for miles with the fore part of the foot held at an acute angle.

Then his arms, hands, and shoulders are so well developed that off the mountains the guide looks top-heavy, but among the peaks this strength is of the greatest use in making a way over the rocks and crags.

All the guides are under strict Government control. They can obtain a license only after an experience of several years as a carrier with properly conducted parties, and even then he has to pass an examination in arithmetic and grammar, accomplishments which seem to have no great bearing on his life-work.

That is why so many of them are well educated men, speaking several languages with ease and fluency.

Some years ago a young guide was discovered washing bottles in a large London hotel, and the friend who found him there took him for a climbing holiday in Cumberland. Next summer his patrons on the Alps were astounded when, after a sudden slip, the guide shouted to them in great excitement, "Whaur's ta gam? Hod tee ta raape, thon clump-heed."

But the majority of the professionals speak English with no such dialectal variants. They are gentlemanly, polished fellows, with capable minds as well as strong bodies.

One of their most pronounced virtues is their cleanliness with their fellow guides. If one of them is unfortunate enough to get lost, his brethren spare no pains and shrink from no dangers in order to secure the body and give it decent burial.

In January, 1912, as a party was descending from a towering peak called the Pigne d'Arolla, the last guide, in crossing a snow-bridge over a deep crevasse, fell through, and the rope by which he was bound to his companions snapped under the strain.

He was heard to shout, but the only available rope, eighty feet long, was far too short to reach him. Rescue with the tools at hand was impossible. Next day a well-equipped party returned to the spot.

A guide, let down into the icy crevasse, was hauled up fainting with the cold. Two others eventually discovered the lost guide, whose body was horribly mangled, at the bottom of the crevasse, some 180 feet deep.

Another loss of two guides on Mont Blanc was followed by several days of daring search and the bodies brought up from a depth of some 200 feet.

In vain the authorities have protested that the recovery of lost climbers at such risk is scarcely worth while, but it is part of the guide's professional code to give his hapless brethren burial.

Some, no doubt, grow careless through over familiarity; others are tempted into difficult situations by the lure of big money, but the virtues that the sport of mountaineering calls forth are big and manly ones.

With ordinary prudence it can be the noblest and grandest of outdoor sports, but without that it becomes mere gambling against the forces of Nature, and in that game it is too often Nature that sweeps away the stake and extinguishes a human life. W.S.D.L.

My emoluments as a collaborator to the *Swiss Observer* do not permit of my making special arrangements to go to Switzerland and visit the Winter-Sports Centres and write wonderful articles to our *Swiss Observer* afterwards and sign them "From our own Correspondent on the spot!" It's a great pity, of course, because I have but little doubt that articles which I could write in that atmosphere would be so absolutely first-class, especially if I travelled and lived there first-class, that the circulation of the *Swiss Observer* would increase by leaps and bounds. (Good idea that and I must make a note to tackle the finance committee about it.) Well, what I really feel is this: It is a pretty awful thought that I, a Swiss, should be faced with news of a form of winter-sport that is entirely new to me, thereby convincing me of my lack of knowledge of what's going on at home and of my lack of opportunity. And, I

ask you, how can I give of my best, when opportunity to improve my knowledge and my experience is denied me? What really has made me write all the fore-going is an article in *The Daily Mail*, 9th Jan. entitled

#### Snow-Shoeing:

A Winter Sport for the less young! You will see that the sub-title just fits me and I really do think that, like some other great Newspapers, the *Swiss Observer* should not hesitate, but send me out to investigate for myself and then report to its Readers. After all, to continue my "grouse," it is all very well to re-print articles which have appeared in the British Press, but it would be a much finer thing altogether if we were allowed to compose our own articles, inspiration for which would be gathered, as I said, on the spot! Well, here goes then:

"I should like to be able to wear brightly coloured sweaters and fascinating scarves," a woman said to me last week. "It is dreadfully dull for me when I go with my daughters to Switzerland. I am too old to learn to ski, and skating bores me, so I remain at home most of the time. I feel it would look ridiculous to wear sports clothes just to sit in the lounge."

It is rather dull for the middle-aged when the young things go rushing off on long ski-ing expeditions, but why don't the mothers take to snow-shoeing? It is a splendid way of getting about the country, and, indeed, you can go to many places on snow-shoes which would be impracticable on skis.

Anybody can learn to manage the "webs" (you must call them that if you want to be really knowledgeable) in half an hour, and they will make you quite independent. It is most improbable that you will ever hurt yourself in any way, unlike the tiresome accidents that occur with skis, and the worst that could happen would be an attack of what is known as "mal de raquettes." This is a form of muscle cramp, but it is generally the result of tramping day after day for hundreds of miles, and nobody who is merely amusing herself need ever experience this particular ailment.

It is delightful to start out on a bright cold morning and feel that the country is an open map, over which you can glide at will. The ski-ers may be scornful. Let them mock. You will enjoy yourself just as much as they do.

True, they can precipitate themselves at lightning speed down steep slopes, but you will have your own peculiar joy when you reach an incline. You crouch on your "webs," crossing the tail pieces, and slide swiftly, not too swiftly, down the hill. Very pleasant, I assure you, and when it comes to climbing the mountain sides—ah, then you score! The ski-ers scramble up laboriously, like crabs, while you walk up with no effort.

The technique of snow-shoeing is almost nil—at least for the individual who merely wants to amuse herself.

Now, my middle-aged friends, put on your snow-shoes and enjoy yourselves. You need no longer envy the younger generation.

KIPPY VINCENT.

And then, there is another bit of news, which clearly requires most careful investigation "on the spot." Says the *Financial Times* on January 11th:

An effort is being made by Belgian financiers to form a syndicate with the object of introducing the reindeer into Switzerland. It is estimated that there are over two million acres of Swiss territory suitable for reindeer breeding and that the vegetation of the high Alps would suffice to feed a stock of some 20,000.

The reindeer already gives useful service in North Finland, Alaska, Siberia and Canada, the Hudson's Bay Company being responsible for the experiment in the last-named country. At one time 70,000 head were employed in Alaska alone, but the stock has been gradually depleted owing to improper feeding methods, unsuitable modes of harnessing and lack of parental selection. There is also a prosperous reindeer farm in the Italian Alps, owned by the Savoy Royal Family, but the animals are not used for commercial purposes.

In the Swiss Alps these useful beasts could find sufficient food at an altitude of 7,500 feet, at which height there is snow practically all the year round. They are sure footed, swift-running draught animals that would rapidly adapt themselves to mountain traction.

I am not quite sure what they mean by "mountain traction." If they think that reindeer will, in future, pull the train up the Bürgstock, for instance, I think they will be quite wrong. Anyhow, the jolly old reindeer would have to choose a different track and what then would become of the present track, I ask you? Might it be used for gliding purposes? I mean for children and grown-ups to glide down the track, sitting on saucepan-lids, etc? And what is going to happen to our cattle when reindeer, 20,000 of them, eat up all the food at altitudes over 7,500 feet? And again, who is going to look after them during the winter? Or will they be provided

## GESCHÄFTS-ANZEIGE

Anstatt durch Zirkular, gestatte ich mir auf diesem Wege meinen verehrten Landsleuten anzuzeigen, dass ich das von Herrn F. W. Rühmann anno 1887 gegründete, sich eines sehr guten Rufes erfreuende,

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"Ich luh nüd nah, und luh nüd nah, bis dass mer überall seid: Wä mer würkli öppis Guets will z'Esse ha So mues mer zu üsrem Landsma Störi gah."

Erlernen Sie mich durch Ihren werten Besuch, ich werde dafür sorgen, dass Sie wiederkommen!

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with extra-special accommodation? I am afraid the *Financial Times* will have to give us more exact details ere we spend part of the emoluments afore-mentioned on the scheme. But, I repeat, the subject ought to be investigated by the *Swiss Observer's* own Correspondent! Otherwise, our Readers may read the above article from the *Financial Times* and never hear anything more about it. (Which probably is just as well!—*Ed. S.O.*)

Having read so far, intelligently and with close attention to details, as Editors do read Manuscripts, you must know, our Chief, thinking aloud, let it be known that in his opinion Kyburg was suffering from some inhibition complex! Well, it's quite true. Kyburg did feel, when writing the above, that he wanted to be away from England for the time being, so as to be able to forget all about Golf!

The reason is really quite simple. A friend, so-called friend I now think, presented us with a tear-off Almanack, which, for every day in the year, gives condensed advice on various aspects of Golfing. You can just see me, can't you, or if you had ever seen me play, then you could, how eagerly I began studying these little bits of advice, not one per diem only, but, anticipating the future, dozens of them. So, armed with plenty of good advice, in tabloid form, I sallied forth yesterday, full of vim, into the beautiful warm sunshine to do battle royal on the Links. And, of course, thrice of course, the inevitable, the absolutely dead certain thing did happen, viz. I fluffed and fozzled all my shots, I could not even put, in short, I was easily the World's worst golfer, until, after lunch, I had forgotten all about those bits of advice and began to play without thinking about anything except if just having a nice half-round before sun-set. But even so, the defeat of the morning round rankles and I felt that if the *Swiss Observer* only saw the paramount necessity of having its own Correspondent somewhere in Switzerland and would chose me, at a princely figure, of course, I might get over yesterday's experience in time.

But if, against all expectations, that should prove to be a vain dream, well, I'll jolly well look up some more "hints" and find out where I did wrong and then you'll see how I shall hit them down the middle next Sunday!

#### Dr. Spahlinger Libelled:

*Daily Herald*, 11th Jan.

Dr. Henri Spahlinger, the well-known Swiss bacteriologist and inventor of the Spahlinger treatment for tuberculosis, has won an action for libel against the Geneva Socialist organ, *Travail*.

Dr. Spahlinger had been accused by the *Travail* of being engaged on an entirely commercial enterprise of no reliability according to scientific standards.

Damages of approximately £80 have been awarded by the Court of First Instance to Dr. Spahlinger against the *Travail*.

The newspaper has given notice of appeal.

What I should like to see is a really competent enquiry into Dr. Spahlinger's claims. As the matter stands now, lots of people have absolute faith in his methods, others haven't and one really does not know whom to believe. The matter being so frightfully important for the human family, why can't it be made a matter of national importance and dealt with accordingly?

### Ticinese Architects and Sculptors in Past Centuries.

By Dr. A. Janner, translated from "Deine Heimat" by one of our readers.

(Continued. Commenced Jan. 18.)

While the Solari were bringing to Venice the finest flower of the Renaissance the Rodari, from Maroggia, were building the cathedral of Como according to the new conception of art. The Rodari are three brothers: Tomaso, the chief, and his two younger brothers Giacomo and Bernardino. We have in them a good example of the way of associating of the artist families of those times. Among the three, four or five members of one family you would always find one whose genius would excel that of the others, and then the brothers or the other relatives would submit to him as a matter of course, as to an acknowledged chief. He planned and held the main direction of the work, the others carried it out. At that time no one gave himself airs of a great artist before having given proof of his worth. To begin with he was satisfied to place himself under a good leader, and to follow the tradition. It is in this way that of many ancient monuments the name of the author has been lost, but the original expression of beauty has been preserved.

In Como, under the direction of Tomaso Rodari, architect and sculptor of exquisite genius, his two brothers, also, created beautiful work. If however, in order to seek after a supposed originality, they should have desired to go their own

### GENEVA KURSAAL AND INTERNATIONAL CLUB.

The Geneva Kursaal is a difficult problem. Since the gaming tables were suppressed in 1925 the casino has cost the taxpayers 190,000 francs a year, and the contract with the company now running it has been cancelled. After much discussion, architect's plans have been drawn up for the transformation of the theatre in the building to provide increased seating accommodation, improvements to the large hall, and the building of a pergola along the front of the terrace overlooking the lake. The cost of these alterations, it is estimated, would be about half a million francs. A report presented to the Municipal Council says it is obvious that the casino cannot exist unless it receives support, and as the town is not prepared to vote large subsidies the restoration of the tables is suggested.

This has been rendered legally possible by a vote of the Swiss people last year reversing, in effect, their previous decision, and the tables have already been restored, under special restrictions, in most of the other tourist resorts. In Geneva, however, the opposition to such a course is especially strong. Two suggestions are put forward in the report above-mentioned: first, that an offer should be made to lease the casino to a company, which should either pay interest and amortization of the costs of reconstruction within fifteen years, or amortization only within ten years, with a percentage of profits on the tables; or, alternatively, that the whole of the ground and buildings should be ceded to a private person or company, the town retaining ground ownership only. The latter proposal—to hand the whole concern over to private enterprise—is regarded as the most desirable solution: provided that any person or company comes forward to undertake it. One thing only is certain—that the town cannot afford to go on losing money on the casino as it has been doing.

While this problem remains unsolved it will be difficult to make progress with the schemes afoot with regard to the International Club, which adjoins the Kursaal. As a result, partly, of the munificence of James J. Forstall of Chicago, it is planned to enlarge the present premises of the club and in addition to organize a kind of country club, with a "plage" or bathing beach, just outside the town near the buildings of the International Labor Office and the site of the new buildings of the League of Nations. So far as the latter part of the scheme is concerned, this seems likely to go through, though opposition may be forthcoming from the owner of some adjacent property, who has already resigned from the committee of the club. As regards the extensions of the present club, the proposal is to take over and demolish a part of the Kursaal premises and build offices and dining rooms, so as to leave the whole of the now existing premises available for other club purposes. A holding company has been formed for the construction of the new and the enlargement of the old premises, and the necessary capital is being raised by gifts, loans, etc. The whole will be a corporative enterprise as between the city authorities, as owners of the Kursaal, the Geneva bankers, the League of Nations personnel, the foreign delegations to the League of Nations, the League of Nations Swimming Club and a few Americans.

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way to-day they would perhaps be forgotten. By Tomaso Rodari are also the two finest churches in the Ticino, viz. the Collegiata di Bellinzona and that of Lugano. The latter has in the facings of its portals perhaps the finest sculptured marble of the 16th century. About the cathedral of Como the great historian of art, Burckhardt, says: "The choirs and the transverse wings are one of the finest creations of the Italian Renaissance." A contemporary of the Rodari is Cristoforo Solari, a sculptor of great capacity, to whom we owe, among others, the very beautiful sepulchral monument of "Lodovico il Moro" and of his wife "Beatrice d'Este," now in the Certosa di Pavia.

And while the Solari were working in Venice and the Rodari in Como the Gaggini, from Bissone, were creating most beautiful work in Genoa, which is still greatly admired to-day. The Gaggini is a family of artists which, single-handed, could demonstrate how, under certain conditions, genius is an hereditary quality. For nearly 200 years the Gaggini open ateliers of sculpture in all parts of Italy. From Genoa, where the head of the family had established himself, his sons and nephews very soon radiate over the whole Peninsula and create everywhere new and fruitful centres of art, principally in Naples and Sicily. Among these artists of the family Gaggini many enjoy great fame in the history of art, like Giovanni, Pace, Elia, Domenico and Antonello. Giovanni Gaggini sculptured portals for Genoese palaces and decorated churches and chapels. Pace Gaggini, also a sculptor, worked for the Certosa di Pavia and at Genoa

### THE FEDERAL POLITICIANS' XMAS PRESENT.

I cannot help it! It must be said! All day long it incommodes me like asthma, and at night it crawls over my bed-cover, as a friend of mine used to say, when he could not sleep. Well, what is it? I want to say a few words concerning one of the two recent elections to the Federal Council. Politics in the "Kirchenbote?" You smile, or do you frown? Perhaps you think: Mind your own business? Still, I cannot keep it, I must say it—unintelligent, shortsighted and unjust was the action of our "Federal Fathers" in refusing the demand of organised Labour to have one of their representatives in the Federal Council, so that they also should share in the governing of our Country, an action due to selfish party considerations. This is a policy which pains me, a policy which, I feel sure, sows the seed of dissatisfaction and unrest. You may ask me: Have you turned "Red?" You may also, as somebody did once to a Basle clergyman, Mr. Altherr, after a lesson during which he spoke of Rich and Poor, send me a red tie. Please yourself, it will not hurt me!

But to prevent any misunderstanding: I am not a politician, and I do not belong to any political party. My profession as clergyman prevents me. The new Zurich Federal Councillor is unknown to me, and his late opponent has, as far as I can remember, only once spoken to me, many years ago. Nor do I know personally Zurich's Mayor. Let me also state that, whatever I have heard of the successful candidate, his character and his abilities, gives me reason to say that he will fulfill his high mission conscientiously and for the common good. He is without any doubt a man, who takes his duties seriously.

All the same I regret deeply, that the Zurich and the Federal bourgeoisie, or rather its political party, have not had it in them to make a concession to Swiss Labour, or rather to give it justice. A considerable part of our population has been vexed. They have been treated as the old-time feudal overlords treated the peasantry, unless revolution wrenched the power out of their hands.

My greatest disappointment is, that an opportunity to appease the disturbed minds, to bridge in a small way the gulf separating our citizens, has been sadly missed. Instead the gulf has been widened. Party-war will become more intense (the first indications have already been given). The small man feels again, that he need not expect justice from his rulers.

You retort: Do you not know the serious reasons which have decided us to disregard the claims of the Socialists? Have you not yet realized, what are the aims of the Swiss Socialist Party with its acceptance of the doctrine, that the proletariat masses should rule State and Society? And have you forgotten with what merciless and even underhanded means they have endeavoured to attain their aims, and how they have jeered at us? Where is their idealism, their unselfishness, where their justice? Was it justice and uprightness which ousted Zurich's former Mayor, a man of merit?

Yes, yes, I know all that. I can also distinguish between Socialism as a movement based on idealism to achieve more unity by co-operation and Party-Socialism as evidenced in political matters. I have often criticized sharply the Socialist

and his fame stretched to Spain, where in Seville he carried out the monument to Caterina da Rivera. Domenico Gaggini, the most famous of the family, leaves immortal works in Genoa, Naples, Palermo and elsewhere. His son, Antonella Gaggini splendidly carried on the tradition with grace and strength and enriched with marvellous statues all the great palaces of Sicily.

In Florence there were no Ticinese artists. Florence was itself a hot-bed of artists and did, therefore, not need the influx of strangers. It had been the cradle of the art—it is there that had taken shape that marvellous springtide of art which became the Renaissance, and on the work of Brunelleschi and of Donatello have learned also the great artists of the Ticino. But within a short space of time the Ticinesi had become competitors and in fact when, in the 16th century, Rome, the eternal city, had at last gathered within its walls the flower of Italian artists, we find the masters from the villages of the Lugano countryside competing, and with success, against the masters of Florence. The height of the Renaissance and the beginning of the Baroque period are completely dominated by our artists. To Bramante from Umbria followed the Tuscans San Gallo and Michelangelo and to them succeeded our own Ticinesi: Fontana, Maderno and Borromini, as the undisputed leaders of the new artistic movement. The cathedral of St. Peter, in Rome, symbol of all that period, though started by the Tuscans, is completed by our own men. The history of Italian architecture from 1550 to 1650 bears only names of Ticinesi as leaders of the various phases.