

# Ticinese architects and sculptors in past centuries [continued]

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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 of 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.

*Christian Science Monitor.*

way to-day they would perhaps be forgotten. By Tomaso Rodari are also the two finest churches in the Ticino, viz. the Collegiata of 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 of 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 of 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.