

# Notes and gleanings

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1930)**

Heft 444

PDF erstellt am: **19.09.2024**

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## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

They are not by "Kyburg" this time, our post reached his office after his departure for his holidays. Although this regrettable happening will no doubt be a disappointment to our readers, it's no fault on the part of our organisation. Where the fault lies we do not know, perhaps it is the post, which in our days takes the blame for so many things, sometimes even undeserved. This reminds us of a story which we read some time ago in a French periodical. We did not attempt to translate it, as we wish our readers to understand that the 'sad state of affairs' does not apply to this island.

### C'EST LA FAUTE DE L'ADMINISTRATION.

Dupont rencontre Durand. Durand a l'air furieux.

—Qu'est-ce que tu as! fait Dupont. Où vas tu! Pourquoi prends-tu une mine si sévère!

—Ah! répond Durand, s'est cette mandite poste! Mais je vais y aller et faire une de ces scènes!

—Ce qui se passe! Il se passe que j'ai de l'argent à réclamer, mais il y a un tel désordre dans cette sale administration!... Figure-toi que je n'ai pas encore pu me faire délivrer la somme que tu m'as promise, il y a deux mois, de m'envoyer par mandat! Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas de quoi se fâcher!

That is as far as we got before the holidays.

### Some Holiday Suggestions.

Now that we are back and have once more found out that the train services never work as smoothly as they ought to at such times, that our fannels never even left the suit-case and that we carried our rackets about in vain, we are looking forward to our summer holidays. If any one of our Readers does not wish to suffer the discomfort of a crossing by the ordinary channel boat, and wants to visit his native land before the channel tunnel is finished, we suggest a nice little boat trip with gramophone, luncheon basket and playing cards complete. Perhaps you can convince someone to lend you a boat and then make a start. The Swiss National Tourist Office issues provisory entrance cards for collapsible boats, canoes and caïques similar to those issued to motorists and motor cyclists. This facility will enable visitors without being a member of a club or an association, to take these boats into Switzerland free of duty for a whole month.

Apart from procuring these cards no other formalities need be gone through. The cards are available at all the big frontier stations and customs offices on the Swiss lakes at a charge of two francs. For the sake of control each imported boat will be sealed. This mark together with the provisory entrance card will have to be given up to the customs official on leaving Switzerland. Anybody carrying a valid passport is entitled to buy such cards.

Another alternative is a trip across France on a motor cycle with a nice straight run at the end of the journey without the threatening consequences of having your licence endorsed. The *Motor Cycle* for April 10th tells the following story:

During a holiday in Switzerland I met a young Austrian, an enthusiastic motor cyclist, who owned a Scott Super Squirrel. One day he was treating me to a hair-raising pillion ride, when he fell foul of the police.

As we rounded a corner we beheld them, 250 yards down a straight stretch, two in number, armed with stop-watches, truncheons, and fierce moustaches. All I had ever heard about the Swiss anti-motoring mania sprang to mind: that until recently certain cantons allowed no motoring on Sundays; that some towns were *verbaten* to motor cycles; in fact, that Surrey, England, was by comparison a motorist's paradise. I pictured myself involved in a foreign court, charged as an accomplice, perhaps incarcerated in the dungeons of Chillon Castle while my friends mourned my loss.

But my Austrian friend knew the two gendarmes, so a pleasant chat ensued instead. They were very interested to hear about conditions in England. Presently one of these worthy men suggested an impromptu speed trial. And before my amazed British eyes my friend took a flying start at the measured distance, and registered 87 kilometer à l'heure. I was then invited to try.

The next time I am stopped for doing 25 m.p.h. on a deserted arterial road, I am thinking of telling the constable about this. But I fear that far from being impressed he will, in the regulation manner, refuse to believe it.

Suppose that we arrive safely in Switzerland with enough energy left for mountaineering we would suggest a trip to Mont Blanc. There seems to be some doubt as to where the summit of Mont Blanc really is, and to prepare for all emergencies a passport for 'all European countries' is indispensable. You will find the reason in a letter to the "*Sunday Times*" for April 13th:

Sir,—In his letter to the *SUNDAY TIMES* of March 16 Colonel Henry Alford, referring to the article on Mont Blanc (for the revision of which I was responsible) in the new edition of the "*Encyclopædia Britannica*," says:—

We are told that Mont Blanc lies within French, Swiss and Italian territory, whereas no part of Mont Blanc is in Switzerland.

I am sure that Colonel Alford did not wish to misrepresent the "*Encyclopædia Britannica*," but his statement is entirely without foundation. The passage to which he refers is the following:—

Blanc, Mont, the culminating point (15,782 ft.) of the mountain range of the same name, lying within French, Swiss and Italian territory. The summit is wholly French.

The most casual reading of this passage should show that it is the range which is referred to as "lying within French, Swiss, and Italian territory." This is emphasized by the statement that "the summit is wholly French." If any doubt were possible with regard to so clear a discrimination between the mountain and the range of which it is a part, it would be removed by the map and other references in the index which make the location of the mountain perfectly explicit.

JOHN I. PLATT.

*University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.*

St. Moritz also deserves your attention, judging by a report in the *Edinburgh Evening News*, April 10th:

### Swiss Leaning Tower.

The little Leaning Tower of St. Moritz—a landmark known to thousands of skiers and summer tourists—is to be straightened. The tower, which is all that remains of the old village of the fourteenth century, has been out of the perpendicular for more than 350 years. But its foundations, though sharply tilted, remain as firm as on the day they were laid. It is this very firmness and strength which is creating the main problem for the architects engaged in the work. To straighten the tower may weaken its foundations. But it is stated that a method has been evolved which will render the foundations level, leaving their centuries-old firmness unimpaired.

And should you find that the weather is none too warm and you do not wish to visit the other side of the St. Gotthard, which, according to a story by an English schoolboy, is "covered with eternal snow for about nine months every year," there will soon be the chance for a few days amongst tropical sunshine, as reports the *Belfast News-Letter*, April 14th:

### Swiss Tropical Island.

Switzerland may shortly have an island tourist resort of rare beauty. The recent death of Queen Victoria of Sweden has raised the question of the future of the little island of Mainau, in Lake Constance, which she inherited from her brother, the late Grand Duke of Baden.

By some strange trick of topography and atmosphere the island enjoys a constant semi-tropical temperature. Palms flourish thickly along its shores, and bananas grow to full fruit. Though tourists have at times been allowed to visit the island, Mainau has been private property for nearly a century.

But there is now a possibility that it may come into the market, in which case there will be a stampede of hotel organisations to purchase the island and develop it as an attractive holiday island.

There is just one final hint to complete your preparations. Take out the manager of your local bank for a good dinner one evening and explain to him that your doctor told you that you simply *must* go away for a few weeks. And as money never seems to be with us for long, perhaps it is as well to know something about it and hear what A.L.S. says in the *Norwood News*, April 4th:

### Nickel Coins.

I must confess that, long as I have been an advocate of nickel coins, it was rather a surprise to find that a nickel alloy was used for coins in 235 B.C. by the Government of Bactria, now known as Russian Turkestan. It is not easy to arrive at an explanation of this fact, but it seems probable that the Bactrians obtained their supply from China. The strangest thing about it is, however, that, although an

ideal material for coins, it was 2,000 years before it was again used for the purpose. In 1850 the Swiss Government adopted a nickel coinage, and obtained supplies from the French Mint at Strasbourg. Perhaps, in another 2,000 years, some dominant nation will impose a nickel coinage on Britain!

And now 'bon voyage' and do not forget your 'Café Kirsch,' for which, by the way, I was charged 1/6 the other day in a little restaurant in the Strand. When you are enjoying your Gruyere it might comfort you to know that it was 'invented' 700 years ago according to the *Nottingham Guardian*, April 15th:

### What is Gruyere?

A tremendous battle is going on between venerable cheese manufacturers in France and Switzerland, each declaring that the other has no business to describe his cheese as "gruyere." The Swiss say they originally invented gruyere, that it was first made at Gruyere in the Swiss cantonment of Fribourg, and that the French manufacturers have been merely imitators and name-stealers. The French indignantly deny this, say they invented the cheese 700 years ago, and that the Swiss town took its name from the French cheese. The dispute has become of financial importance since the packing of gruyere cheese in silver-papered wedges brought about an enormous increase in popular demand, both from private people, and particularly from hotel-keepers.

### Switzerland in Spring.

If ever you are asked, as it happened to me many a time, why one *does* go to Switzerland, you cannot do better than pass on the following account to your friend. Although Easter is gone, a holiday in Switzerland in Spring or early summer can hardly be beaten. *Glasgow Herald*, April 10th:

Easter is approaching and the holiday spirit is resurgent. This spirit may be said to have several awakenings when in the course of the year a brief holiday may be snatched now and then from among the many dull work-a-day weeks and months. But when Easter comes in sight, and nothing can disguise imminence of spring with its rising of a new tide of life, the holiday spirit becomes frankly insistent. Then it is almost a necessity for the individual to leave for a time the dust and din of the city and to enjoy a period, however brief, among those invigorating influences which are mysteriously wrapped up in what is generally called a change of scene. For many people holidays at this time of the year are limited to "a long week-end," while some cannot do more than leave their homes for Easter Monday.

But there are a good many others who are able to go farther afield and to spend a few weeks or more on the Continent. Tourists of this class are already flocking to Switzerland, "the playground of Europe," for the spring and early summer. Once they have entered the portals of that enchanted land, the grandeur of its mountain scenery, the incomparable beauty of its valleys and lakes, and the wonder of its colourful drifts of Alpine flowers are things the memory does not easily let slip.

Every Swiss town and village, hill and valley, possesses its own peculiar features which attract visitors from all other lands, but there are certain places which nearly all tourists include in their itineraries. One of the most interesting of Swiss towns is Lucerne, which stands on the shores of the beautiful lake of the same name. In spite of its modern appearance and its magnificent hotels, this old town is one of the quaintest in the country, and it stands in the heart of a district which holds many delights for the tourist. From the town itself many excellent motoring roads wind round the lake and up as far as the snow-line. The mediaeval walls and towers of Lucerne, its wooden bridges, and the exquisite landscape round about, provide an unique setting, while there are abundant facilities for sports and games. The 18-hole golf course is one of the best on the Continent, and there are seven public tennis courts.

The Engadine, in the upper valley of the River Inn, a tributary of the Danube, contains several of the notable tourist centres in Switzerland. At almost any period of the spring and summer this valley is a paradise of wild flowers, which include a good many varieties not found elsewhere in the Alps. The visitor who goes to the Engadine at this season of the year will find the springing Alpine flowers, of wonderful colourings, closely following the retreating snow-line. Samaden, which is a

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favourite resort in the Engadine, lies about 5,670 feet above the sea, in the sunny sheltered upper valley. Flowery meadows and larch and pine woods enhance the beauty of the situation. The magnificent Hotel Berina, which is open all the year round, commands a fine view of the Piz Berina and Piz Palù. Samaden is famed for its sports facilities. It possesses a fine golf course, laid out in 1893, on which championship and other matches are played during the season. On this course the Margna Cup will be competed for in July, and the open championship of Switzerland will be decided there in August, while other fixtures are also arranged.

For many years Pontresina has held sway as a climbing centre, and a favourite health resort. It is situated in a sunny valley in the Upper Engadine at the foot of the magnificent Berina mountain chain, and possesses numerous hotels and boarding houses. The contour of the district is specially adapted for all kind of sport. Extensive meadows stretch out in front of the houses forming good skiing grounds both for beginners and experts. For advanced skiers Pontresina is the starting point for some of the finest skiing expeditions in the Engadine. In the summer its position gives it great advantages as a high Alpine station and climbing centre.

The references to Golf Courses ought to be of special interest to "Kyburg." We hope that he has greatly benefited by his few days' respite and will be ready to tackle the Gleanings again next week with renewed vigour and enthusiasm.

### THE COSTS OF PRODUCTION FOR SWISS CHEESE.

On June 8th 1927 the U.S.A. raised the duties on Emmenthal cheese in accordance with Article 315 of the American Customs Tariff. This article enacts that in order to fix the duties to be levied on imported goods, the costs of production in the home country and in the country from which the goods are imported must be compared. Should the costs of production be less high in the other country, the difference must be balanced by means of higher duties. An American customs committee came over to Switzerland in order to find out the costs of production in Switzerland and applied to the various organisations and associations of milk producers and cheese-makers for all necessary information. The reason for the steps taken by the U.S.A. lay in the complaints of the American makers of Emmenthal cheese in the State of Wisconsin and Ohio, who demanded better customs protection. Their production of "Swiss cheese" amounted to 3.5 per cent. of the total cheese production in the U.S.A. in 1923, and to only 4 per cent. of the total milk produce. Swiss exports have not, as yet, shown any decrease in consequence of the rise in duties, but they would in all probability have gone up without this new burden. As the question of the cost of production has a fundamental importance, a few objections may be made here against the conclusions arrived at by the past investigations.

One of the methods of calculating the costs of production of milk, and therefore also of cheese, was as follows: the part of the total expenditure of a dairy ascribed to the costs of production for milk was calculated according to the proportion of the receipts for milk as compared with the total receipts of the dairy. If, for instance, the total receipts amounted to Frs. 50,000, and 25,000 of these were due to milk produce, half of the expenditure was also put down to the latter. The other method was that of deducting the cost of the manufacture of cheese from the selling-price of cheese. These two methods cannot rightly be applied to conditions in this country, the methods employed in Swiss dairies being entirely different from those employed in America.

The costs of production in a large dairy with varied branches of work cannot be calculated in so simple a manner, and the methods employed are therefore liable to criticism from a scientific point of view.

At the time of investigation (1923-24) other kinds of dairy produce in America were sold at a loss, and these losses were partly made good by a rise in the price of milk; it will therefore be seen that the allied branches of dairy-farming had their share in the rise in the costs of production which were put down to milk produce. The time in which the investigations into Swiss conditions took place was also exceedingly favourable for American Cheese Makers owing to the fact that that price of ground in America has gone down by about half, and that the Swiss franc is again at par in New-York. Swiss costs of production were converted into dollars at the time for the sake of comparison with American costs of production, the value of the Swiss franc being about 9 per cent. lower than that it is to-day. Moreover the interest on outstanding debts was calculated at 6 per cent. for America and at 4.5 per cent. for Switzerland. In addition to this the American Tariff Committee looked upon New York as the place of destination for "Switzerland cheese," whilst Chicago is, in reality, another very im-

portant market, and the costs of production of cheese exported by Switzerland are considerably raised by the additional freight,—a matter which was not taken into consideration in the American report. Nor can we agree with the rise due to quality. "Switzerland cheese" having attained higher wholesale prices in New-York than American cheese, the difference in the prices was added to the American costs of production. According to these methods of calculation and these different suppositions, the costs of production of the Swiss Emmenthal cheese are lower than the costs of American cheese, and also lower than they are in reality, in spite of the fact acknowledged by experts that Swiss exports meet with great difficulties on the World's market on account of their high prime-cost. S.I.T.

### DINING CARS FOR WORKMEN.

A novel 'dining car' has been brought into service by the S.B.B. on the new goods station near Basle, which will be used until the various buildings are erected.

The car consists of two old railway carriages which have been transformed into a 'restaurant car' with all the latest appliances. The cars have electric light and heating throughout. One carriage serves as restaurant whilst the other is used as kitchen and office.

The canteen is open day and night and it is said that a greater variety of meals are served than on a real restaurant car. The service is of great benefit to the nightworkers and to others, as the prices are very moderate.

The whole organisation is in the hands of the "Schweizer Verband Volksdienst" whose staff specialise in this kind of establishment, and are prospering in various large railway stations.

The canteen at Basle will be able to be used elsewhere once the station buildings are complete.

### Doings in Our Colony.

#### SWISS COLONY DINNER TO MONSIEUR PARAVICINI.

We have received the following circular which we reprint for the benefit of our Readers who may not be members of one of the Swiss Clubs in the United Kingdom:—

London, 19th April, 1930

Dear Sir (or Madam),

You will be pleased to learn that in order to mark the completion of Monsieur C. R. PARAVICINI'S 10th year of very distinguished service as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James', the Swiss Societies in London have arranged a DINNER & CONCERT to be given in his honour in the name of the Swiss Colony in the United Kingdom on SATURDAY, 31st MAY, 1930 at the Monaco Restaurant, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1. (Evening dress optional—Ladies cordially invited.)

At the same time, a presentation will be made to Monsieur Paravicini on behalf of the whole Swiss Colony in the United Kingdom. This presentation is to be on democratic lines, i.e., the necessary funds are to be raised by voluntary individual contributions not exceeding 2/6 each, and you are invited to subscribe to the list of your Society not later than the 15th of May.

Accommodation for the Dinner and Concert being limited, it is essential that those who wish to attend should apply early for tickets (at 7/6 each) to their Society.

With patriotic greetings, Yours very truly,  
for the ORGANISING COMMITTEE,

JULES ZIMMERMANN, Hon. Secretary.

#### SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

On the 10th of April we had the pleasure of listening to the Annual Concert of the Swiss Choral Society. The Choir was in excellent form and, under the very able conductorship of Mr. E. A. Seymour, all the songs were rendered in a way which made it a real joy to listen to the melodies of well-known composers like Attenhofer, Angerer, Silcher, Ulrich, Suter and Mendelssohn.

I do not intend to criticise each item as, generally speaking, the singing was very good, and some songs, such as "Waldesrauschen," "Der Jäger Abschied," etc., were especially well rendered.

We would like to congratulate the Choir on the remarkable progress which they have made, and we hope that this progress may continue and that we shall have further opportunities to appreciate the serious work and steady improvement of this Society.

It must, however, be very disheartening for the members when they see how little support they get. The Conway Hall was hardly half filled and one really wondered how it is possible that a concert like this cannot produce more interest amongst the Swiss in London. Apart from any feeling of Patriotism or "Heimatgedanken" I would like to emphasise that the production of this, at present, small Choir are such that it is well worth to take the trouble to go and hear them.

As the Choir, judging by the attendance at the

concert, seems to get quite a good support from English people, it would perhaps be advisable to include some English songs in future programmes. At the same time I would like to mention that the bass voices in the Choir are somewhat weak in comparison with the very good tenors, and it would improve the choir as a whole if new members could be found, especially to strengthen the lower voices. Amongst so many Swiss in London this should not be difficult.

The solo parts were divided between Mr. Samuel Kutcher whose violin solos were greatly enjoyed by the audience, and Miss Berta Zimmer who sang songs of Brahms and Strauss.

There was also a Yodel-Double Quartett composed of members of the Choir whose efforts were received in good spirit.

### L'activité du Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger de la N.S.H. en 1929.

Le onzième rapport annuel du Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger vient de paraître.

En le parcourant, on est frappé dès l'abord par la diversité et l'étendue de la tâche accomplie en une année par un appareil administratif réduit en somme à sa plus simple expression. Il est vrai que l'oeuvre continue à bénéficier des bases posées par ses fondateurs, Gonzague de Reynold et Robert de Traz, et que la Commission des Suisses à l'Etranger fut toujours présidée par des hommes de valeur, en tout dernier lieu par M. Schürch, rédacteur en chef du "Bund." Le Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger eut, de plus, le privilège d'avoir à sa tête, durant 5 ans, M. E. Zellweger, homme d'une grande culture et de beaucoup d'initiative, doublé d'un juriste éminent; le rapport nous apprend qu'il vient de céder sa place à M. Job, Dr. ès lettres, ancien directeur de l'Ecole Suisse de Naples.

L'Organisation des Suisses à l'Etranger compte actuellement 180 groupes, 100 conférences ont été organisées durant l'année 1929. Félix Moeschlin a parlé aux Etats-Unis de la Suisse, force spirituelle. La vie artistique et littéraire de la Suisse italienne a été révélée par M. Zentralli, de Coire, dans diverses colonies suisses de France et d'Italie. En Allemagne, M. Charles Fournet a initié son public aux trésors de la littérature éclosée sur les bords du Léman. Gobi Walder et Emile Balmer ont lu des fragments de leurs oeuvres, l'un en Allemagne et l'autre en Autriche. Des soirées de chansons populaires suisses furent organisées en Belgique avec le concours de M. Bundi et de Mlle. Hellmüller, dans les Balkans, avec le concours de M. E. Pignat. Le Colonel Léderrey a parlé en Espagne de la formation du soldat suisse et Emile Gos, en Italie, des splendeurs de la région qui va du Léman au Corvin, etc. Le rapport du Secrétariat donne, en un schéma frappant, un tableau de ce service des conférences fort intéressant à étudier de près. Le service des films a remporté un succès significatif. Presque toutes les sociétés suisses de France y ont eu recours, celles d'Italie également, d'Allemagne, de Londres, d'Amérique, etc. Le service des journaux a été réorganisé en vue d'une plus grande extension. L'*Echo Suisse*, la revue des Suisses à l'Etranger à laquelle le Secrétariat collabore régulièrement a augmenté son tirage. La distribution des almanachs Pestalozzi a atteint le chiffre de 4,000.

Au pays, également, le Secrétariat s'est dépensé dans de nombreux domaines. Les problèmes posés par la situation juridique des Suisses à l'Etranger (taxe militaire, situation des travailleurs suisses en Italie, Suisses sinistrés de guerre) ont été suivis avec beaucoup d'attention et ont exigé du ler Secrétaire des études très approfondies propres à amorcer des solutions satisfaisantes.

Plus d'une soixantaine de recrues venues de l'étranger ont bénéficié des services du Secrétariat. La Maison de vacances des Suisses à l'Etranger au Château de Rhäzüns a ouvert pour la première fois ses portes à la plus grande joie de ceux qui purent en profiter. La Fondation "Oeuvre de vacances des Suisses à l'Etranger" au capital de 70,000 francs, due à la générosité d'un Suisse autrefois à l'Etranger et indépendante de l'oeuvre de la Maison de vacances, a permis aux plus pauvres de venir presque sans frais respirer l'air du pays à Rhäzüns. Le Secrétariat a été chargé de plus, par le Comité en faveur d'une Maison Suisse dans la Cité Universitaire de Paris, de mener à bonne fin la collecte qui doit permettre l'érection d'un home d'étudiants suisses à Paris. Ses efforts ont été couronnés d'un plein succès.

Une seule ombre au tableau, c'est que les fonds du Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger sont près d'être épuisés, les souscriptions régulières ne couvrant qu'une partie des dépenses; aussi, une campagne financière s'impose afin de continuer à assurer le plein rendement d'une oeuvre aussi utile aux Suisses de l'étranger qu'à notre pays lui-même.

### SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

Many will doubt the veracity of the report that, when a squad of men went to clear the ground and demolish the huts at Bellinzona, they found two Bernese (or were they from Zofingen?)