

Général Guisan

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A number of Basle wine merchants have been sentenced to fines of frs.50 to frs.2,000 for diluting Kirsch and other spirits (Schnaps) and selling them as the genuine article.

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The Swiss Himalayan Expedition under the leadership of Mr. André Roch has returned home. Unfavourable weather conditions prevented the alpinists from achieving their object but three peaks said not to have been conquered before were successfully scaled. The following is an extract from a report published by *The Times of India* (26/9/39).

After successfully scaling Mount Dunagiri (23,184 feet), Rataban (20,100 feet) and Gauri Parbat (22,071 feet), the Swiss climbing party set out from the Base Camp on September 9th to conquer Badrinath peak (23,420) on a clear morning. The party consisted of Messrs. André Roch (leader), David Zogg and Fritz Steuri (Alpinists) and four Sherpa porters, namely, Gamboo, Andhva, Nuri and Thilia, and two Dotiyal coolies, Ajitia and Bali.

The party, after struggling for nearly eight hours through ice and snow, reached Camp One, 19,000 feet, at 3.30 p.m. and pitched three tents in succession in the direction of the peak on a snow saddle which was considered safe from the danger of avalanche. From noon the weather grew bad and the party settled early in their tents. Weather conditions continued to remain unfavourable throughout the night and the morning dawned with additional mist and fog. As a result, the party decided to halt until weather conditions improved. After breakfast on the morning of September 10th, the party again retired to their tents. At about 12 a.m., suddenly a whistling and buzzing sound was heard and a terrific wind blew down over the tents. Before they could make out what it was, a terrific avalanche swept over their tents and carried them down nearly 500 yards. The party was thrown over an area of fifty yards on either side of the snow ridge, and each of the members struggled frantically for his own life in a state of semi-unconsciousness.

The Swiss climbers, recovering from the shock, saw Nuri and Thilia, Sherpa porters, over the surface of the snow struggling for their lives and trying to reach a safer place. Other porters, Bali, Gamboo and Andhava were found under neck-deep

snow, and the leader helped by the other two climbers rushed for their rescue unmindful of their personal injuries. The ice-axes were all buried under snow and the digging of the snow in order to extricate the half-dead persons had to be done with fingers only. Nearly two hours were spent in extricating them.

The sixth porter, Ajitia, was not, however, traceable. A vigorous search was immediately conducted without success. It appears that Ajitia, the Dotival mate-coolie, was thrown by the avalanche into one of the crevasses. Mr. André Roch made further attempts to search the crevasses with the help of a rope, but all efforts proved futile. Nuri and Thilia, who were injured, managed to undertake the journey to the Base Camp with the help of Messrs. Zogg and Steuri, who were themselves injured. Bali, Andhava and Gamboo had lost consciousness and had perforce to be left behind under the care of the leader. Mr. André Roch displayed uncommon strength in remaining alone with the porters the whole night and the following day up to noon, although he himself did not escape injury. Gamboo ultimately succumbed to his injuries. Mr. Roch was able to bring Andhava and Bali to consciousness. Both these porters were able to move down with the help of ropes the next morning.

GENERAL GUISAN.

(The following is an extract of an instructive article which appeared in the "Christian Science Monitor" of October 14th.)

On Wednesday afternoon, August 30th, the Swiss Parliament was convened to elect the General of the Swiss Army. The Swiss, jealous of equality among cantons, prefer in times of peace to leave the Army without a Supreme Chief. The levies of the different cantons are gathered into five divisions or "army corps," each having its own "Divisions Kommandant," the highest attainable rank in time of peace; there is no general. Such a situation is believed to exist in no other army in the world.

The General is appointed only in case of national emergency. The necessity of entrusting the care of military operations to a single head is obvious. But the Swiss General is far more than the Supreme Chief of the Army. He takes under his authority all the state services connected with the needs of the Army.

Transport, telegraphs, telephones, post offices, censorship, are all placed under the General's direct authority, and their employees submitted to military law. Even public economy becomes so closely linked with the military, that it is dependent on it. The Government executives lose a good deal of their authority, or become subservient, in many respects, to the military.

The Swiss General may be best compared to the Roman dictatorship under the Republic. The Roman dictator was elected in case of pressing danger such as that of Hannibal approaching Rome, and he laid down his powers as soon as the national danger was over. Until then, however, his power was supreme.

This is what, with but few variations, happens in Switzerland. The Swiss General might himself become a danger for the country, if he did not follow the dictates of the most conscientious citizenship. There is

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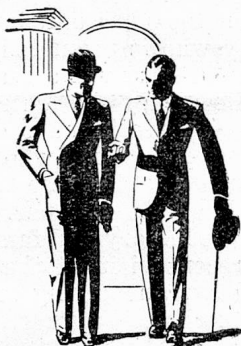
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no example of any difficulty in this respect in Swiss history. Each one of the Swiss generals has resigned his functions — not his title — as soon as the situation has become normal again.

In 1914 Switzerland was taken unawares by the war. The election of the General was then the object of intrigues and quarrels which were felt at times, likely to bring Switzerland to the verge of breakdown. Germany used great pressure to have its own nominee elected. No such thing happened this time. The election of Gen. Henri Guisan was prepared long ahead by the Government.

THE SWISS NATIONAL EXHIBITION.

(From the "Lancet" October 28th.)

The exhibition at Zürich which opened at the beginning of May will close its doors on October 31st. Despite the troubled European outlook in the summer and the outbreak of hostilities in the autumn, practically every Swiss set foot in it. Foreign visitors were relatively few, and this is the more regrettable as little is known abroad of the share taken by Switzerland in European civilisation. The exhibition was meant to correct this impression. In the gallery of great Swiss were not a few who have contributed to the advancement of medicine and natural sciences. There we find Paracelsus (1493-1541) born in Einsiedeln, the great reformer and iconoclast; Felix Plater (1536-1614) to whom we owe the first inkling of the importance of the thymus in the bodily economy; Caspar Bauhinus (1560-1624) whose name is attached to the ileocaecal valve; T. C. Brunner (1633-1727) who discovered the glands in the stomach; Wilhelm His the elder, anatomist, and his son who discovered the bundle in the heart; Th. Kocher (1841-1917) the Bernese surgeon whose name is attached to goitre and thyroid gland. Mathematics owe a debt to the several Bernoullis and to Euler, botany to A. P. de Candolle, natural science of the eighteenth century to A. von Haller, physician, naturalist and poet. Physiognomy will always be linked with the name of Lavater, just as education with Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Fellenberg. Not to speak of the leaders of the Reformation — Zwingli, Calvin and Bullinger.

A special pavilion was devoted to prophylaxis and healing. The Institute of Anatomy contributed some fine preparations of human organs. Physiology was chiefly notable for the work of the Alpine observation station on the Jungfrauoch. Goitre, cretinism, myxœdema were naturally conspicuous in a Swiss exhibition. The model hospital proved a great attraction. Medical research was represented by several university institutes, emphasis being laid on the co-operation of practical medicine, biology, chemistry and pharmaceuticals. The big firms of the highly developed Swiss pharmaceutical industry — Ciba-Basle, Sandoz-Basle, Hoffmann La Roche-Basle and Wander-Berne — had a common pavilion in which the importance of the scientific work done there was shown in graphs. Of every 1,000 preparations which are produced only 4 find their way to the public. Research work accounts for 18 per cent. of the cost of production. As an example, the synthesis and action of Coramine was shown in detail. Sandoz gave in a schematic illustration the complicated isolation process of *secale cornutum*.

DIE HEIMAT EMPFÄNGT 800 ENGLAND-SCHWEIZER.

Wie schon so oft seit den ersten Mobilisationstagen, sind sie auch diesmal noch fast mitten in der Nacht aufgestanden, um ja rechtzeitig auf dem Posten zu sein, sobald sie ihre Kräfte in den Dienst des Vaterlandes stellen sollen. Dieses Sollen ist kein Müssen — es ist ein Wollen. Frauen aus allen Bevölkerungsschichten, kleine und grosse Schulbuben stellen sich den Heimschaffungsbehörden immer wieder mit der gleichen unermüdlichen und freiwilligen Hilfsbereitschaft zur Verfügung, sobald es darum geht, Auslandschweizer mit offenen Armen, offenen Herzen in der Heimat zu empfangen, überzeugend willkommen zu heissen. Zum Teil kommen diese treuen Helfer, die sich für einige Stunden in Serviertöchter und Krankenpflegerinnen, in Gepäckträger verwandeln oder sich sonstwie ungemein nützlich machen, nicht von Vallorbe selbst, sondern von weit her, von oben herab, haben anderthalb Stunden Weges hinter sich und noch einmal mindestens so viel vor sich. Aber das spielt für sie gar keine Rolle, sie betrachten es als ihre patriotische Pflicht, als eine Selbstverständlichkeit. Keinem würde es auch nur in Traum einfallen, für seine anstrengenden Dienste auch nur einem Fünfer Entgelt anzunehmen.

Vallorbe, heute noch fast ausschliesslich nur als Grenzbahnhof, als Dorf mit so und so viel Einwohnern und etwas Industrie bekannt, hätte es aber verdient, dereinst als Inbegriff der Heimattreue und Volksverbundenheit in die Schweizergeschichte einzugehen!

Donnerstag, morgens 5 Uhr. Es hat zwar zu schneien aufgehört, ist aber immer noch bitter kalt. Auf dem Bahnhof Vallorbe herrscht fieberhafte Tätigkeit, gilt es doch die Vorbereitungen zum Empfang von über achthundert Schweizertöchtern und durchweg jungen Männern zu treffen, die ihre Stellen und Schulplätze in England vor zwei und drei Tagen freiwillig verlassen haben, um in ihr Vaterland zurückzukehren. Zu den Rund 120 Helferinnen und Helfern aus Vallorbe und Umgebung ist diesmal noch eine grössere Anzahl aktiver Wehrmänner gestossen, die sich des schweren Gepäcks und des Formalitätenkrams annehmen werden. Die paar hundert Liter Kaffee, Milch und Schokolade werden in einer Soldatenküche zubereitet. Aus Lausanne sind 2,000 zusätzliche Weggli und Gipfeli eingetroffen. Jeder und jede ist an ihrem Platz, alles ist in Ordnung — es könnte eigentlich losgehen.

Aber der französische Specialzug aus Dieppe und Le Havre mit unsern Landsleuten kann noch nicht einfahren. Der Orientexpress muss zuerst die Schienen freigeben. Endlich ist es so weit. Im Nu ist aus den gerade abkömmlichen Frauen und Wehrmännern ein Gesangverein improvisiert, der Dirigent, ein energischer Feldprediger aus Lausanne, sagt noch schnell den Text der zwei ersten Strophen vor, ein stämmiger Soldat mit einer mächtigen Schweizerfahne und eine Krankenpflegerin mit dem roten Kreuz im weissen Feld grüssen die langsam einfahrende Eisenbahnwagenschlange. Und aus vollen Kehlen ertönt "Rufst du mein Vaterland," mit einer Begeisterung und echten Herzlichkeit gesungen, die alles ansteckt, mitreisst. Vergessen sind stürmische Ueberfahrt, die lange Reise im völlig verdunkelten, überfüllten Abteil und der Gedanke, seit 15 Stunden nichts mehr Warmes genossen zu haben — die Fenster werden herunterge-