

# Notes and gleanings

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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The committee of the Swiss League of Nations Union suggests that the private manufacture and sale abroad of war munitions should be prohibited, and that such manufacture should be a monopoly of the Confederation.

The voters of the canton Basel-Stadt rejected last Sunday an initiative which sought to abolish the annual Labour holiday on the 1st of May.

The professors teaching in the cantonal schools have presented a petition to the Lucerne Grand Council, stating that their remuneration is on too low a basis. The council, after discussion, has fixed a new minimum of Frs. 6,500, with a maximum of Frs. 8,500 per annum.

Sued for defamation of character, the *Tribune de Genève* has won a law suit which will help to expose a nefarious traffic that has been carried on by a "Prof. Demole." This gentleman has done a lucrative business in selling foreign decorations, doctor titles and degrees of a sham university in America to whomsoever was willing to remit the necessary fee.

The height of the enlarged and reinforced railway bridge at Olten has been successfully raised 40 centimetres, with the aid of twelve pumps, each of a capacity of 100 tons.

A strike, lasting about eight weeks, in consequence of the Sauer Company in Arbon insisting on a reduction of wages, has now been called off; work has been restarted on the terms offered by the company.

A large number of people had congregated near the Roc Double (Sion) in order to watch blasting operations: the first charge, after much delay, went off with terrific force, throwing missiles to unexpected distances and thereby seriously injuring ten of the spectators.

Fissures in rocks having appeared for some time, a considerable transformation of the ground has now taken place at Münchenstein (Basle), where a quarry is being worked by the Portland Cement Company.

A serious motor accident occurred near Hurdun (Zurich Lake) when the driver lost his way and the car fell down a steep road bank. Of the five occupants, Friedrich Lutz, from Zurich, was killed on the spot, whilst two ladies were gravely injured.

For sheer personal endurance the feat of a Roumanian ought to appeal to those who complain about the discomforts in travelling. When the Bucarest-Paris express arrived at Basle, a youth of 21 was discovered on the axle of one of the coaches; he had "entrained" at Bucarest, and if it had not been for a stroke of undeserved bad luck, would probably have been able to complete his journey to Paris.

## OBITUARY.

Charles Edouard Lardy, formerly Swiss Minister in Paris, died on Wednesday, June 27th, at Châtillon-sur-Bevaix (Neuchâtel) at the age of 76. Born in Neuchâtel as the son of a lawyer, he followed the profession of his father, and at an early age entered the service of the Political Department. He became attached to the Swiss Legation in Paris, where the whole of his diplomatic career was spent; he was Swiss Minister from 1883 to 1917, when he retired into private life. Well known and highly respected in international politics, M. Lardy was one of the most successful Swiss diplomats (see also special article).

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

### Cost of Living in Switzerland.

In view of the summer holiday plans which are being made by, let us hope, a great many, it is more than ever important that absurd statements concerning the price of things in Switzerland

should be contradicted. In the *Pall Mall & Globe* (June 2th), in an article by C. H. Charles, Ph.D., the writer states:—

The extraordinary topsy-turvydom of German prices came home to me first when boarding the German boat from Switzerland to Lindau, on the Lake of Constance, where I paid 10 centimes for a cup of coffee and a roll (a penny) for what had cost me 3 francs (2s. 6d.) at the fashionable pastrycooks in Zurich the day before.

Prices in Switzerland rose exorbitantly high, about three times pre-war, and ten times the corresponding German prices. A sandwich and a bottle of beer cost 3 francs 50 centimes (say 3s.) in Zurich, and its equivalent in Munich 3 1-8d.

Lunch at a respectable middle-class restaurant in Munich, consisting of soup, hard-boiled eggs in mayonnaise, stewed veal in casserole, cake in lemon sauce, and a bottle of beer, cost, inclusive of tip, 7,000 marks—sevenpence!

The price of the same meal either in Switzerland or France (where prices are considerably cheaper than in Switzerland) would not have been less than 4s. to 5s.

A cup of coffee and a roll costing Three Swiss Francs! My dear Doctor, either you misrepresent facts intentionally, or you are guilty of a *suppressio veri*, which is simply a more subtle form of giving out false news! It is just possible that this Doctor stayed at one of the smart hotels at Zurich, where they charge 3 francs for breakfast, and that, owing perhaps to having lived too well in his younger days, and therefore being on a strict diet at present, the Doctor could eat only one solitary roll and drink one cup of coffee. But to state in cold print as if it was the usual price that at Zurich one has to pay 3 francs for a cup of coffee and a roll, is simply absurd, and, although the Doctor's article is, of course, written with a definite end in view, I think his case would not have suffered if he had not tried to embellish it with ridiculous statements of the kind referred to. What would an Englishman say if I wrote to a Swiss paper, complaining that for a single small Italian Vermouth I had to pay 4s. (5 Swiss Francs) in London, and yet I would be speaking or writing the strict truth!

I find in *The Evening News* of June 22nd in an article, entitled "10,000 Passports in a Week," that, according to Messrs. Cook's representative, a week's travel and hotel expenses in Switzerland now cost £8 7s. 6d., instead of £10 8s. 6d. last year, i.e., a reduction of £2 1s., or 20 per cent! Messrs. Cook's ought to know, seeing that, even by charging the price mentioned, they have still got to make a decent profit out of it! Now, my dear Doctor, go and repent!

### The Grisons.

Now that at least and at last one road in the Grisons has been opened for motor traffic, I am pleased to find several illustrated articles in the British Press dealing with the delights of a summer holiday in that delectable part of Switzerland. In the *Graphic* (June 23rd) Mrs. Will Cadby has a really charming article dealing with the contrasts a trip through the Grisons provides, and from which I quote the following:—

Another traffic contrast is the Rhaetian Railway, that work of most daring engineers, which finds its way to most beautiful and remote places. It certainly has nothing old-world about it, but is the very latest word in electrical construction. There is a network of it, and however alarming its conjuring tricks may seem at first, we soon become reassured, and sit quite calmly while it executes a double spiral underground, looping the loop twice, so to speak, crawling round giddy heights, and crossing bridges that look more decorative than solid and strong.

Another curious contrast is the Grisons centres. At St. Moritz, Davos, Arosa, Pontresina, and Flims we are in a world of fashion, entertainment and social activities. The *Suvretta* Haus at St. Moritz is of international fame; the "hotel of the Xes," as it has been called since its dignified hospitality has been enjoyed by ex-princes and ex-ministers. It has all the atmosphere of courts and big cities, and yet it is in the heart of this pastoral old-world canton. The *Belvédère*, too, at Davos offers its visitors the same kind of entertainment as they would get at Monte Carlo or Biarritz.

Although it detracts from the idea of contrast, those villages must be mentioned which offer the tourist the advantages of both worlds, such as Klosters, an attractive untouristy old village, which yet has its tennis tournaments, its water festivals, and its entertainments and dances. Others of this kind are Maloya, Sils Maria, Basegia, Bergün and Andeer.

And before the contrast theory wears too thin, there is just the one of the fishing to mention. Innumerable rivers and lakes, teeming with fish, and no fishermen! In a canton like the Grisons there is practically a river or lake everywhere.

With regard to climbing, it is no good attempting any contrasts at all for there is good climbing in most centres and first-class mountaineering in many; even at Klosters, a place practically unknown to English climbers, there are three huts within a walk, and four more within reach for big tours. It is to be the centre this summer for climbing courses by the Swiss Alpine Club. There will be ten days of lectures and instruction, and ten days of touring to put the theory into practice. Perhaps this will prove yet another contrast!

### Swiss Forests.

The *Northern Daily Telegraph*, of Blackburn, writes on June 23rd:—

Switzerland to-day reaps the benefit of her wise



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policy of forestry pursued for hundreds of years. Out of every 100 square miles of territory, 17 are covered with forests. The municipal forest of Zurich, famous throughout the world, has been producing timber continuously during the last 600 years. Crop after crop has been grown and marketed and new crops started.

It is a common saying in Europe that "Switzerland holds her mountains up and her taxes down" with her forests. These forests, largely municipal, protect farms and towns by preventing landslides. In addition they pay dividends which materially reduce tax levies. Moreover, it is her forests, as well as her mountains, which make the men of Switzerland strong and self-reliant. It is her forests, too, which help to attract and charm tourists.

### A New Composition by Othmar Schoeck.

*Musical Standard* (June 16th):—

The famous Swiss composer, Othmar Schoeck, whose opera, "Venus," which was produced for the first time at the International Musical Festival of Zurich, and aroused great interest amongst British visitors, has had another great success in Switzerland. On March 19th a chamber orchestra produced at Zurich a set of songs with orchestral accompaniment, called "Elegy." Felix Löffel, of Berne, was the soloist, and made this new composition an enormous success. All the critics agree that Schoeck has surpassed himself. With him Swiss music at last is sure to find international recognition.

### Navigation on the Lakes of Switzerland.

*Engineering* (June 22nd):—

Within ten years of Fulton's first Hudson River steamer trips on the Clermont, in 1807, the Zurich engineer Bodmer placed the *Stephanie* on the Lake of Constance; but the engine, which was to come from England—as in the case of the Clermont—never arrived for some reason, and the paddle boat *Wilhelm Tell* was the first Swiss steamer. This in 1823, took 4½ hours for the journey Geneva-Uchuz, now done in 2½ hours. Other routes were soon opened, also on the Swiss-Italian lakes. At present the largest boats on the Swiss lakes have a length of 70 m. (230 feet), and carry 1,600 passengers; they are propelled by 1,500-h.p. engines at speeds reaching 32 km. (20 miles) per hour. Altogether 131 steamers and motor boats, aggregating 37,000 h.p., are in service, 100 of which serve for passenger traffic. The first all-Swiss boat was launched by Messrs. Escher, Wyss & Co., of Zurich, in 1837; later Messrs. Sulzer Brothers, of Winterthur, became powerful competitors in this speciality, and the two firms have also built ships and engines for other waters. The first Swiss Diesel motor boat was constructed by Messrs. Sulzer in 1909.

From the Educational Supplement of *The Times* (June 23rd):—

It is reported that three tourists from Basel, members of the Swiss Alpine Club, and the guide Alexandre Perren, of Zermatt, succeeded in making last month the first ascent on ski of Mount Castor (13,848 feet).

### Swiss Dyestuff Makers—An Important Statement.

*Manchester Guardian* (June 22nd):—

In reference to the note here on Tuesday, headed "Dyestuff Combination: Swiss joining Germans and French," the Geigy Colour Co. write:—Only one of the Swiss dyemakers—namely, the firm of Durand and Huguenin, S.A.—is concerned in the combination mentioned. The other Swiss dyemakers—namely, the Society of Chemical Industry, Messrs. J. R. Geigy, S.A., and Messrs. the Sandoz Chemical Works—have no connection whatever with the German I.G. nor with Messrs. Durand and Huguenin, and have no intention of joining the same. We are making this statement authoritatively also on behalf of the other two Swiss firms.

### Russian Trade Boycott.

*The Times* (June 26th):—

The intention of the Soviet Government to carry out an economic boycott of Switzerland has not been officially communicated to the Swiss Federal Council, who only heard of the decision through the newspapers. This measure is causing no sensation whatever in

Switzerland, where it is regarded as a mere bluff or as a means devised by the Soviet Government in order to make an impression on the Russian people.

There are no official trade relations between Switzerland and Russia, so that it would be difficult to break them. As for individuals, very few are trading with Russia, and this trade is of no importance. Official circles in Berne attach no importance to the boycott. Federal Councillor Motta, who is the chief of the Political Department, is leaving to-morrow for Italy, where he is to spend his holidays. The majority of the Swiss Press expresses the wish that the Soviet Government will stick to its word and recall all its agents in Switzerland. It expresses also the opinion that this measure is a useless attempt to intimidate Switzerland.

At the same time, it is very deplorable that Switzerland and Russia cannot come to some sort of working arrangement. Both countries could greatly benefit by an active commercial exchange. For the moment they are at loggerheads over political questions, which is always an unprofitable and, between different countries, silly thing to do!

#### Swiss Market for British Goods.

*Evening News* (June 26th):—

Britain has not received much from Germany in the way of reparations since the war, but at least one industrial bone which she used to pick has been handed over to us.

It comes from Switzerland, and Mr. E. C. D. Rawlins, who has been British Commercial Secretary there, told "The Evening News" about it to-day.

"Since the French occupation of the Ruhr," said Mr. Rawlins, "the Germans have been unable to supply the Swiss with coal, steel, iron, and other raw materials."

"The consequence is that the Swiss, who like the British perhaps better than any other nation in the world, are turning to us for those commodities which they do not expect to be able to obtain from Germany for another 20 years."

"I find that a surprising number of people in this country," Mr. Rawlins continued, "look on Switzerland as a purely picturesque State whose chief industry is that of catering for tourists. The little Republic has immense manufactories."

"The Swiss are probably the best electricians in the world, and they also make engines, motor-cars, machinery, textiles, and many other things."

"Since the Socialist proposal for a capital levy was so heavily defeated, the country is settling down again, and capital is being expended on development of works."

"While the levy proposition was in the air, capital was taking flight, but it has come back now. There is plenty of money there, and, I believe, in one street in Basle there are about thirty millionaires."

#### ROUND AND ABOUT.

Sincere sympathy will be extended to Mr. and Mrs. O. J. Walser, of 86, Oekenden Road, N., who lost their little daughter, Dora Lena (4½ years), in one of those accidents which unfortunately are only too common in the London streets. The girl, accompanied by an elder brother, was crossing the road in front of a stationary bus, when an approaching motor-car knocked her down; the driver, on perceiving her, put on the brakes, but was unable to prevent the accident. The poor little child was at once taken to the hospital, suffering from a compound fracture of the right leg, and her parents hoped against hope that she would recover; she died, however, from septic poisoning nine days later.

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The discussion in our columns about "Friday Banquets" has been followed by a few further letters, which, however, I should be sorry to publish, as they contain personal references of an acrimonious character. One correspondent takes very strong exception to the tone of the last communication and blames the editor for having allowed the subject to be referred to at all. With the latter contention I cannot agree. We have at all times invited comments on matters of general interest to the colony, and we will not take the responsibility of refusing a hearing to criticism directed against established customs and notions. The original suggestion of Mr. Cusi was quite natural from his point of view: he is certainly entitled to speak "for himself and several friends," and there is nothing remarkable in the fact that some people disagree with him. I am only sorry that I must refrain from publishing Mr. Cusi's reply to the animadversions upon him, but I am convinced that he will recognize the futility of continuing the correspondence on these lines.

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A reader writes to me to the effect that on visiting the "Foyer Suisse" last Sunday he was somewhat disappointed. He fully expected to see "some chamois hunters, Jodlers, ladies in Swiss costume, or, in default, wall paintings of Swiss scenes and historical characters": he also missed shelves for a library which, he thinks, ought to be one of the fixtures. I do not know whether the management can satisfy all his wishes: they are evidently in the luxury line, for which nothing has yet been allotted from the available funds. There seems to be plenty of room for gifts in the way of clocks, pictures, etc., and as this particular correspondent is an inveterate book-worm, I beg to suggest to him to make a start and set a good example.

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I have been asked repeatedly what had become of the Swiss boxer about whom some very promising particulars were published in the *S.O.* some weeks ago. The truth is that, much to his aversion, Robert Roth has found himself compelled to fulfil

a previous engagement on the Continent. After some strenuous wrestling—in Madrid he defeated no less than thirteen challengers—he has returned to London and rejoins Mr. Abplanalp. Buoyed up by his successes, he is losing no time and is going into training quarters at Maidenhead. We may confidently look forward to see him officially introduced to the English boxing world at Olympia towards the end of July.

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Dr. Hugo Kast, who for the last six months has acted as chief assistant to Prof. F. de Quervain, the eminent surgeon in Berne, has returned to London: he is hon. surgeon to the German Hospital, Dalston.

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#### COMMUNIQUE PAR LA LEGATION DE SUISSE.

Le Capitaine Frédéric Rihner, Chef de l'Instruction des Troupes Suisses d'Aviation, et M. Auguste Haefeli, Ingénieur-Constructeur en chef pour l'aviation aux ateliers fédéraux de construction, qui, avec M. Henri Martin, Conseiller de Légation, étaient délégués du Gouvernement suisse au Congrès International d'Aviation de Londres, sont repartis pour la Suisse.

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Sont de passage à Londres, M. Marc Peter, Ministre de Suisse à Washington, accompagné de son fils, se rendant à Genève; le Dr. Carl Mutzner, Chef du Service Fédéral des Eaux du Département Fédéral de l'Intérieur, qui est, en compagnie de M. Henri Martin, Délégué du Conseil Fédéral au Congrès International de la Navigation, ouvert le 2 juillet.

#### FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

Following upon the speedy closing of the subscription lists for the English, Dutch and other parts of the Austrian International Loan, it was only to be expected that the Swiss portion, which only amounted to the relatively small sum of Frs. 25,000,000, would be snapped up equally soon. This proved indeed to be the case, and subscriptions actually amounted to 30 milliards. This enormous over-subscription must not, of course, be taken too literally as illustrating monetary conditions in Switzerland. It is, no doubt, largely accounted for by the fact that, in view of the almost certain over-subscription, many subscribers greatly increased the amount of their applications in order to be assured of some reasonable allotment when the amount issued came to be shared out among the applicants.

Brown, Boveri & Co., of Baden, Switzerland, have just issued the preliminary figures of their balance sheet and profit and loss account for the past year. The net profit left, after meeting all expenditure and writing off large sums on depreciation, is Frs. 715,127. This compares with Frs. 1,082,665 last year, and the directors again find it impossible to distribute any dividend to the ordinary shareholders.

The Federal Finance Department, the National Bank and the various Swiss banks have been in negotiation regarding the issue of a new Federal Loan to convert the 6% Federal Treasury Bonds, which fall due to the extent of Frs. 228,000,000 on the 5th of September next. An agreement has been reached, in the terms of which the banks will take firm Frs. 150,000,000 of the amount now to be issued and an option of a further Frs. 80,000,000. Bonds will bear interest at 4½%, and the issue price will be 99%. The currency of the new bonds will be four or five years, according to the choice of the subscriber.

Readers in this country have a natural interest in all efforts which tend to facilitate direct commercial intercourse between Switzerland and the North Sea ports—and hence with Great Britain. The report of the Swiss Towage Company in Basle therefore provides some interesting features. The net profit achieved in the year 1922 was Frs. 88,598, as compared with Frs. 97,406 in 1921. The present profit is to be devoted almost entirely to reserves, while last year a dividend of 4% was paid. A few extracts from the Directors' report will be referred to in the "Financial Notes" of next week.

#### STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

	BONDS.		SHARES.	
	June 26	July 3	Nom.	June 26 July 3
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	77.75%	77.75%	500	648
Swiss Confed. 5th Mob. Loan 5%	101.12%	101.00%	500	680
Federal Railways A—K 3½%	79.67%	79.90%	500	545
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	102.87%	102.50%	1000	3090
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	71.32%	71.25%	1000	1035
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	648	500	672
Crédit Suisse	500	680	500	672
Union de Banques Suisses	500	545	500	522
Fabrique Chimique et-dev. Sandoz	1000	3090	1000	3195
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2085	1000	2135
C. F. Bally S.A.	1000	1035	1000	1035
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	500	672	500	670
Entreprises Sulzer	1000	665	1000	666
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	500	340	500	335
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Milk Co.	200	181	200	180
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Köhler	100	112	100	109
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	485	500	490

#### A SWISS CIRCLE at the LYCEUM CLUB.

On Monday, the 2nd of July, a reception was held at the Lyceum Club, Piccadilly, in honour of Madame Paravicini on the occasion of the foundation of a Swiss Circle at the London Headquarters of the Lyceum Club.

It is well known that the Lyceum Club has branches all over the world and, besides its branches, circles of the different nations at the Club Metropole in London. Switzerland has already five Lyceum Clubs, but has had, so far, no circle in London.

Madame Paravicini has been nominated Hon. President and has been received in this quality by the President of the Circle, Mrs. Carson, who presented her at the entrance with a magnificent bouquet of flowers.

The reception took place in the Ball Room, and after tea Sig. Volonino and Mlle. Garelli sang selections from Puccini and Massenet.

The following address was delivered by the President, Mrs. Carson:—

"We are assembled to-day to inaugurate the Swiss Circle. I am sure I voice the feeling of everyone present in giving a cordial welcome to Their Excellencies who honour us this afternoon by their presence, in spite of the many claims which Society imposes upon them just now."

"We should like to add a special vote of thanks to Madame Paravicini, who has so kindly accepted to be our Hon. President. We also thank heartily the friends present and absent who are supporting us."

"In forming a Swiss Circle we hope to tighten the links that already exist between our two countries. Switzerland has shown how much she values the lead of our Lyceum. She has no less than five affiliated Clubs in Geneva, Berne, Bâle, Lausanne and Neuchâtel, all centres of organised activity."

"The Swiss women have already shown themselves in the foremost rank of education, interested in social questions pertaining to the development of their country."

"We shall look forward to welcome amongst us our Swiss sisters who are living in or passing through London, and, ultimately, to have a flourishing Swiss Circle where we shall find, in the midst of actualities, refreshing memories of that lovely country, from which most of us have derived so much benefit in its various fields, education, health and, foremost but not least, pleasure and recreation."

In her reply, Madame Paravicini said that she was greatly honoured, not only by the dignity conferred upon her, but also by the kind words pronounced by Mrs. Carson. She said that she need not praise the Lyceum Club and its aims and accomplishment, as this association was sufficiently known all over the various continents. It was, however, a special satisfaction to her to see the interest taken by the Club in her own country, and she would try to show her appreciation for the compliment just paid to her by putting at the disposal of the newly instituted Circle such collaboration as she would be able to lend.

She would wish the Committee to believe that her interest is and will remain assured to the admirable activity of the Lyceum Club and not the least to the welfare of the Swiss Circle and the branches in Switzerland.

Numerous members of the Lyceum Club were present, and the representatives of the Swiss Colony included the Swiss Minister, M. Hoffmann-de Visne, Colonel Borel, M. Borsinger, M. Sterchi, etc.

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