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# The Swiss Observer

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## SWISS LEGATION.

32, Queen Anne Street, W. 1.  
London, January, 1923.

## HOME NEWS

Federal Councillor Motta has given an official reply to National Councillor Grimm, who, on behalf of the Socialist party, criticised the Government for the inactivity shown in face of the possible serious consequences resulting from the occupation of the Ruhr. We reprint the following resumé from the *Journal de Genève* (11th Feb.):—

"Le Conseil fédéral croit avoir fourni pendant la guerre et depuis 1918 des preuves de vigilance et de dévouement à la chose publique. Sa conduite d'hier peut inspirer la confiance. L'unité de vues qui règne dans son sein, le souci des responsabilités, la passion de la concorde sont de sérieuses garanties contre les faiblesses inspirées par la crainte et les entraînements irréfutables. Le principe suprême de notre politique demeure l'observation de la neutralité.

lité. Celle-ci est entière pour l'Etat; elle existe, mais dans une mesure moindre, pour les individus. Cela devrait inspirer à chacun le sens de l'impartialité et la modération de plume et de parole nécessaires lorsqu'on traite des sujets internationaux.

"Notre entrée dans la S. d. N. n'a pas altéré ce principe. Nous avons demandé de pouvoir rester neutres. Il est vrai que l'article 11 du pacte donne le droit à un membre de la Ligue d'attirer son attention quand un conflit se présente qui met la paix en danger. Il n'est pas contestable que le différend actuel entre la France et l'Allemagne rentre dans cette catégorie, et il est certain que l'Europe ne jouira pas d'une paix définitive avant que le problème des réparations ait trouvé une solution conforme à la justice. Les Etats intéressés auraient tort de considérer comme inamicale une démarche que pourrait faire un membre de la Ligue. Mais, cela dit, le problème n'est pas résolu. La question est de savoir si notre intervention servirait la cause de la paix. Pour qu'une intervention de la S. d. N. soit efficace, il faudrait qu'elle fût acceptée par toutes les parties, y compris l'Allemagne. La S. d. N. n'est pas un super-Etat; elle ne doit pas l'être; elle n'est pas non plus un tribunal suprême.

"Le Conseil fédéral a réfléchi au succès que pourrait avoir une telle démarche. Il n'a pas attendu la requête socialiste pour s'occuper de la question. Il a recueilli des informations diplomatiques et rien ne l'a autorisé à croire que d'autres Etats suivraient son exemple. Il savait qu'à fin janvier le Conseil se réunirait à Paris. Il supposait que ses membres examineraient la situation créée par le conflit dans la Ruhr, et il espérait que M. Branting vouerait son attention à cette grave affaire. Des discussions officieuses ont bien eu lieu au sein du Conseil, mais les Etats intéressés ont fait savoir qu'ils s'opposeraient formellement à toute intervention de la Ligue.

"Le rôle de la Suisse n'est pas de protester dès qu'un différend se produit en Europe. Le jour viendra peut-être où elle pourra élever sa voix en faveur de la paix, mais une démarche intempestive pourrait barrer la route à une démarche utile. On chercherait d'ailleurs vainement dans les actes du Conseil fédéral une déclaration faisant croire que la S. d. N. aurait pour tâche de liquider la guerre. La Suisse a, au contraire, toujours tenu à marquer une distinction entre le pacte et les traités.

"Présentement, nous avons besoin de concorde. Tous les Suisses devraient examiner les événements au point de vue des intérêts de leur pays. La condition d'une action extérieure efficace est l'unité intérieure."

The proposed Customs initiative has now been rejected by both the National and States Councils; the date of the plebiscite has been fixed for April 15th.

Elections for the Grand Conseil of the Canton Ticino took place last Sunday, and the constitution of the new council will probably be as follows:— 26 Liberals, 24 Conservatives, 7 Socialists, 6 Agrarians, and 2 Economic Reconstructionists (Rinnovazione).

A lively scene characterised the proceedings of the Grosse Rat in Zurich last week. The Socialists insisted that the police authorities should open to inspection all the buildings where arms were stored in cases of emergency; the request being refused, the Communist Kung relieved himself of his feelings in a somewhat unparliamentary fashion, causing general uproar, with the result that the sitting had to be suspended.

The postal service from Switzerland to Germany (and Scandinavia and Russia) is being directed via Schaffhausen, Romanshorn, Lindau, and in order to prevent delays at the frontier, German mail vans will enter as far as Zurich. Direct railway traffic between Basle and places along the right bank of the Rhine has been partly suspended. In reply to a delegation, the Federal Council has promised to take the necessary diplomatic steps in Paris and Berlin in order to safeguard the economic interests of Switzerland.

The Association for Inland Colonization is inviting the Federal Council to investigate the possibility of settling Swiss farmers in agricultural districts in France. According to enquiries made by the Association in official circles in France, there is every indication that considerable employment could be found for our own nationals as *fermiers* or *métayers*.

The French Government has prohibited the importation of Swiss gold watches for the time being, as the agreed contingent has been exceeded.



## Why we entered the United Kingdom.

(A Tale in dates mostly.)

of Zurich, Switzerland.

Switzerland - 1872	France - - 1878
Denmark - - 1875	Holland - - 1880
Germany - - 1875	Spain - - 1885
Sweden - - 1875	Luxembourg 1887
Norway - - 1876	Italy - - 1902
Austria - - 1876	U.S.A. - - 1913
Belgium - - 1877	U.K. - - 1922

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A remarkable accident, causing the death of a workman, happened in Davos. Owing probably to excavations in connection with the electricity works, in construction at the southern end of the lake, enormous blocks of rock and earth suddenly detached themselves from the cliff and were precipitated on to the thick ice. The resulting pressure on the water caused the ice to break at some distance away and the appearance of a water spout which completely submerged the neighbouring pumping station.

\*\*\*

As a result of infection, contracted at a post-mortem examination, Prof. Dr. F. von Werdt died in Aarau at the age of 43.

\*\*\*

A whole family, named Gubser-Bachmann, father, mother and two children, were burned to death in a fire which destroyed a small building on the Feusisberg (Schindlegli).

\*\*\*

A fire in the depot of the S.A. Bell in Basle, which broke out last Sunday evening, destroyed large quantities of fruit and vegetables.

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

**Lawinengefahr in der Wasserau.**— Während der Föhn mit heissem Atem durch die Schluchten des Alpeins trich und ein warmeselnder Regen den Schnee an den Berglehnen zu Brei erweichte, löste sich letzten Mittwoch, vermutlich nach Mitternacht, am sog. "Laseier," auf der Nordseite des Alpeis, eine mächtige Grundlawine los. Durch schneelastende Tannen- und Buchenbestände bahnte sich der weisse Gisch seinen Weg, unaufhaltsam und alles mit sich reisend was ihm im Weg stand.

Kurz nach Erreichen des offenen Talgeländes bog ein Seitenarm der Lawine links ab, kam aber wunderbarerweise unmittelbar vor dem Häuschen des Sântisträgers Rusch zum Stehen. Zirka 30 Meter neben der gefährdeten Behausung wogte der Hauptstrom weiter zu Tal. Noch war das weisse Ungetüm kaum 100 Meter von der Wirtschaft zur "Alpenrose" entfernt, als sich der rasende Lauf verlangsamte und die verderbendrohenden Massen zur Ruhe kamen.

Wer je einmal das Knirschen einer zum Stillstand kommenden Grundlawine gehört hat, dem bleibt der Ton zeitweilig im Ohr. Unbegreiflich erscheint es daher, dass niemand von den Anwohnern irgend einen Lärm gehört haben soll. Alles lag im tiefsten Schlaf, und mit recht gemischten Gefühlen bestaunte am Morgens die Familie des Sântisträgers die hochgetürmten Schneemassen. Die Sache war für diesmal gnädig verlaufen. Was geschehen wäre, wenn die Lawine durch irgend ein Hindernis die geringste Ablenkung erfahren hätte, ist nicht auszusprechen.

(St. Galler Tagblatt.)

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**Ein ganzes Haus ausgestorben.**— In Glarus ereignete sich der gewiss nicht alltägliche Fall, dass innert wenigen Wochen ein ganzes Haus, eine ganze Familie unter normalen Umständen ausgestorben ist. Im Dezember starb plötzlich Bäckermeister Dominik Freuler auf dem Spielhof. Noch

während seine Leiche aufgebahrt im Hause lag, verschied auch sein mit ihm im gleichen Haushalt lebender Schwager Xaver Zraggen, und am andern Morgen früh starb im "Salem" in Ennenda, wohin sie sich vor wenig Wochen in Pflege begab, auch dessen Witwe Maria Zraggen-Freuler. (Tagesanzeiger, Zürich.)

\*\*\*

"Zwo." — Nachdem kürzlich auf einem deutschen Bahnhofs ein Eisenbahnglück dadurch entstanden ist, dass ein Weichensteller am Telefon "Geleis Zwei" statt "Geleis Drei" verstanden hat, ist nun angeordnet worden, dass im Telefonverkehr der deutschen Reichseisenbahnen in Zukunft "zwo" statt "zwei" gesagt werde.

Bei der schweizerischen Artillerie ist das "zwo" schon längst gebräuchlich, und auf der Allmend in Frauenfeld kann man schon seit Jahren bei Schiessübungen der Artillerie "zwo weniger" und "zwo mehr" kommandieren hören. (Thurgauer Zeitung.)

### THE WHITE CROSS IN THE RED FIELD.

It is no new thing, but we must talk it over seriously to-day. We Swiss pride ourselves in possessing a handsome national emblem, displaying at the same time two colours agreeable to the eye and reminding us of a symbol honoured throughout the world. In addition to that, the humanitarian movement known as the "Red Cross" chose to display its beneficial activity under an emblem which is the inverse of that to be seen on our flags, thus paying homage to our country, the birthplace of its originators. If this does us credit, it also causes frequently amusing confusions. Even in the United States, where people boast more than anywhere else of an admirable primary education, the members of the different Swiss economic missions, whose motor-cars carried Swiss flags, were more than once hailed as delegates of Red Cross Commissions. What is more serious is when foreign hotel proprietors, merchants and shopkeepers carry on their activities under the auspices of our national emblem, simply because they think it is a nice combination of red and white. In different countries Swiss people have more than once had opportunities of taking exception to the frequent and manifest abuses of our national emblem. They have given utterance to such protests on more than one occasion, but in the past the matter has not been taken up energetically by the authorities. It must be at once added, however, that it is, as a matter of fact, not easy to stop these abuses abroad with efficient legislative measures. The Federal authorities, nevertheless, some time ago entrusted the Law Department of our Foreign Office with the preparation of a Bill likely to combat encroachments on our heraldic rights. The Federal Office for Intellectual Property has also gone into the matter; moreover, Professor Claparède, a high judicial authority, has published a report on the question which comes to the conclusion that, in spite of existing difficulties, which must not be underrated, it would be quite possible to protect the emblem more efficiently than has been done hitherto, not only in the home country, but also in foreign countries. He is of opinion that a Bill should be drafted which would strictly forbid the use of public emblems for aims of a private and commercial character, provided it is not exceptionally allowed by the authorities. If this Bill is, however, to be brought in, it will only have a chance of being passed, provided public opinion in Switzerland is fully enlightened as to the number and the character of the abuses in the different countries. It is not sufficient that the Swiss Heraldic Society has recommended it and passed a resolution in its favour; it does not suffice either that the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique has adopted a resolution to the effect that it approves of the proposals contained in Professor Claparède's report and would welcome their becoming law. A great amount of evidence must be produced and must be sent to Switzerland from all those countries in which there is a need to protect the Swiss emblem. Now, there are sure to be amongst the readers of *The Swiss Observer* many who in their own experience have witnessed such abuses. They would render their country a great service if they would kindly publish in *The Swiss Observer*, as exactly detailed as possible, what they have seen in this respect or have heard from others, or, if they prefer to do so, to send such information to Dr. Paul Lang, 28, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1, with a view to having it transmitted to the proper quarters in Switzerland. All such information will, of course, be dealt with in a strictly confidential way, and no sources will ever be made public.

This is now an opportunity for us Swiss abroad to show that, if we have suffered morally from the disagreeable way in which our national flag and emblem has been dealt with in some quarters, we are willing to do our little bit to stop efficiently such practices in future.

P. L.

### FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

Several more of the large Swiss banks have now issued their figures for 1922. The Comptoir d'Escompte de Genève shows a net profit, inclusive of

the carry forward from the preceding year, amounting to Frs. 3,764,680. This compares with Frs. 4,407,971 in 1921. It is proposed to devote Frs. 1,159,529 to reserves and to writing off depreciations, to place Frs. 50,000 to the staff pension fund, and to pay a dividend of 5 per cent., which latter item will require the sum of Frs. 2,250,000. This is the same distribution as that made last year. The balance of Frs. 305,150 will be carried forward.

The Banque Fédérale in Zurich has also published preliminary figures, showing a somewhat improved profit as compared with last year. The net return is Frs. 4,524,292, as against Frs. 4,497,606, and a dividend of 8 per cent. is again to be paid on the share capital of Frs. 50,000,000.

The returns of Leu & Co.'s bank in Zurich, which are the second to be published since the reorganisation, show signs that this old-established institution is again finding its feet. The net profit for 1922 amounts to Frs. 2,172,567, as compared with Frs. 1,336,892 for 1921. It is proposed to pay 6 per cent. on the paid-up portion of the new preference shares, to allocate Frs. 250,000 to reserves, and to carry forward Frs. 339,962.

Of the Cantonal banks and smaller concerns which have so far issued the figures of their profits the Glarner Kantonalbank shows a slightly decreased net profit. The allocation to reserves is only to be Frs. 46,500, as compared with Frs. 196,240 last year, and the Cantonal Exchequer will benefit to the extent of Frs. 156,000, as compared with Frs. 54,833 last year.

The forecast of the dividend prospects of the Peter-Cailler-Kohler concern, which was reproduced in these columns last week, has proved to be unduly pessimistic. At the meeting of shareholders, which is to be held in Vevey on the 28th of next month, it will be proposed that 5 per cent. should be distributed. The rumour which was current in the newspapers that the company would be obliged to pass the dividend entirely, was never justified by the quotation of the shares in the Geneva Stock Exchange.

The meeting of debenture holders of the Banque Foncière du Jura, which was held in Basle on the 9th of February, gave its approval to the proposals for allowing a moratorium for the debentures and treasury bonds falling due up to December, 1927. From now until that date the rate of interest payable on these obligations will be dependent on the results of each year.

### STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

BONDS.		Feb. 6	Feb. 13	
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	...	79.35%	79.35%	
Swiss Confed. 9th Mob. Loan 5%	...	102.05%	102.05%	
Federal Railways A-K 3½%	...	84.55%	84.30%	
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	...	106.00%	106.55%	
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	...	76.85%	76.50%	
Zurich (Stadt) 4% 1903	...	100.50%	100.55%	
SHARES.		Nom.	Feb. 6	Feb. 13
		Frs.	Frs.	Frs.
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	650	663
Credit Suisse	...	500	682	697
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	545	552
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	1575	1600	
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	1230	1272	
C. F. Bally S.A.	...	1000	950	960
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	...	500	595	600
Entreprises Sulzer	...	1000	630	620
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	...	500	319	320
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Milk Co.	...	200	155	183
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Kohler	...	100	95	104
Comp. de Navig. sur le Lac Léman	...	500	462	455

### CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by his Correspondents.

### APPEAL TO SWISS RESIDENTS IN LONDON INTERESTED IN SWIMMING.

To the Editor of *The Swiss Observer*.

Sir,—As everybody can gather from Swiss sporting papers, our people at home are showing great interest in swimming, and whereas before the war only the principal towns, like Geneva, Zurich, Schaffhouse and St. Gall, boasted of organised swimming clubs, there are now numerous other lately created swimming associations, which are known collectively as the Swiss Swimming Association (Schweiz. Schwimmverband). Not only did national swimming competitions take place last year but even international events were recorded, and the programme for the coming season is very promising indeed.

Every Swiss knows that in London more than half a dozen Swiss Clubs are in existence, with numerous sports clubs; but although there are a good many swimmers who formerly took a leading part in their respective clubs at home, and further sportsmen attracted by this sport, they have not yet united to form a swimming section. I am sure there are a good many Swiss who would be glad to join such an association, and I therefore appeal to those leading sportsmen who by their influence are in a position to create more interest and to undertake such steps as would lead to further negotiations. There are many of our countrymen who would be grateful to have a chance to devote some of their leisure time to a little training.

Hoping other members of our colony will express their opinions,

Yours truly,

A. KUENZLER.

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