

Notes and gleanings

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1926)**

Heft 269

PDF erstellt am: **08.08.2024**

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maternity nurses in England, and some years ago my wife was also confined at a Swiss maternity clinic, where the organisation, nursing and efficiency were in every way admirable.

Your correspondent's reference to one of Dr. Rollier's clinics has too personal a flavour to carry conviction. The excellence of the treatment and results obtained at Leysin are too well-known to require any defence against such statements. Though never a patient there I have visited several of the clinics. One of the outstanding features about the tubercular patients one sees at Leysin is the extraordinarily healthy and well-fed appearance so many of them have, and though it is many years ago now I still recall the spotless refectory and excellently appetising meal which I shared with several recovering patients and their friends, and this after a visit of inspection to the kitchen. I may add that I called unannounced at these clinics, just presenting my card as a medical visitor.

The Swiss *femme de chambre* is still often an amazingly efficient person who makes an art of service which appears neither to bore her nor to be beneath her. This quality she shares with the Swiss nurses it has been my privilege to come across. Is not the absence of this quality one of the vulnerable spots in many modern English nurses? I doubt if the deficiency, where it exists, is due so much to the training as to the same cause which has made it a commonplace amongst so many of those English women who still pretend to earn their living in domestic service.

The Spahlinger Treatment.

General interest in this country is kept alive by an interview which a *Sunday Chronicle* representative had with Mrs. Roscoe Brunner on her return, about a fortnight ago, from a visit to the laboratories at Geneva:—

Although M. Spahlinger has not had sufficient money to make the complete remedies which could be safely placed in the hands of any good physician who understands the administration of injection, or tuberculosis, he and a group of doctors in Switzerland are working wonders with the partial remedies. They have only got about two vaccine treatments and nine of the serums there, but their chemical knowledge is increasing daily, and they are obtaining wonderful results.

To produce the full treatment it will require a great deal of money. At least 22 horses are needed to produce the serums, which must not be confused with the vaccines.

The vaccines are not so complicated, nor fortunately do they require such a long time to make. It is by their injection that people can be immunised against tuberculosis, as they are to-day immunised by injection against small-pox.

Wireless in Switzerland.

Though late in the field the Swiss Radio stations have quickly made up for lost time, judging from the following report sent by an English commissioner who is touring Continental broadcasting stations, and published by the *Evening Standard* (October 6th):—

I had not originally intended to go to Berne, but I was told that I should make a great mistake if I missed seeing that station. So I set out with a letter of introduction to Mr. Anselmi, the station engineer.

I was surprised on the way to find the interest the peasants in the mountains take in wireless. One lad I spoke to had a very well-made three-valve set, and he was able to get the best out of it.

Mr. Anselmi proved a charming host, and we sat far into the night, discussing his receiving and transmitting stations, and the difficulties he had gone through at the outset of broadcasting in Berne.

The transmitting station at Munchenbuchsee which I saw the next day, is a very fine station. It is particularly interesting in that in the same building there are two high-power commercial transmitters working independently, but on the same aerial and also in the same building, un-screened from the others, is the broadcasting transmitter. One end of the broadcasting aerial is attached to one of the main masts, and the other to a small mast which has been specially erected.

In all the rooms of this station there is laid on a supply of compressed air, which is used for cleaning the apparatus by blowing out the dust with powerful fans. While we were examining the air compressor pump and stand, by the apparatus in the engine-room, a crash was heard near the transmitter, which was working at the time. We returned to ascertain the cause, and found that a large moth, flying about the building, had passed between the plates of one of the condensers operating at a pressure of 9,000 volts. Its wings had touched on either side—hence the crash!

Leaving Berne I set out for Zurich, making my way along the Lake of Lucerne and via Zug. Listening on my set in the evening, I was again surprised to hear such poor quality from Radiola. Situated as it is in the heart of Paris, one expects so much and gets so little that is good. Daventry again was jammed with Morse. The interference from trams was very severe, as I was right in the

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centre of the town and on the main tram route.

By the way, much is being done in Switzerland, especially in Berne, to mitigate this trouble. The aluminium trolley wheels are being replaced by carbon rods, which, it has been discovered, considerably reduces the trouble.

I was far from expecting the surprise I received when I entered the Zurich studio. Zurich is only a low-powered station, but it is apparently well supplied both with money and brains. Their engineer, Mr. Spoerri, took me round.

When you enter the station studio you are at once struck with the fact that there is only 25 per cent. of the damping used in English studios; and that, in consequence, you can speak with ease and can recognise your own voice—which in our studios is often difficult. Again, the windows were open and the studio was beautifully cool.

This change is due to their acoustic engineer, Mr. Oswald, of Winterthur, who has arranged to do most of the necessary damping to the microphone by lowering over the instrument what looks like a large lamp-shade of wicker and canvas stuffed with cotton wool.

Another device is a "curtain-damping" behind the piano to bring out that instrument more or less, as the case may be.

Everyone who has listened to a broadcast from some public hall in England will have noticed the unpleasant echo present. At Zurich they have found means to reduce this along the same lines, and they enclose the microphones in a specially-constructed basket, which is also padded with cotton wool.

A Free Port in the Channel.

From the *Siren and Shipping* (October 6th):—

We understand that a group of Swiss financiers have approached the Belgian Government with a request for sanction to acquire about 800 acres of land on the left bank of the Scheldt at Antwerp for the purpose of creating a free port. This section of Antwerp's water-front is at present occupied partly by warehouses and partly by a queer "longshore" community whose presence has long been a source of anxiety to the municipal authorities. The latter, in fact, are known to have been contemplating the clearing of this area for some time past, but their plans envisaged the construction of additional docks as an extension to the port of Antwerp. The Swiss, however, are very desirous of having direct access to the sea, and they have offered to do the clearing and all necessary constructional work if the Government will approve of their free port scheme, the advantages of which to Swiss importers and exporters would be numerous and important. In addition, the financial interests concerned are reported to have offered to take over the responsibility of carrying out the much-discussed project of connecting the two banks of the Scheldt at Antwerp by a tunnel, thus doing away with the present system of ferry-boats. The Belgian Government, it is stated, are now considering these proposals, but no official pronouncement on the subject has yet been made.

A New Wallpaper.

Aluminium, which was invented, I believe, and first put to practical use in Switzerland, and which reigns supreme in most of the kitchens, will soon be seen climbing the walls of the dining and drawing rooms, according to the *Mechanical World* (October 8th):—

According to a report from the American Consul at Zurich, Swiss wallpaper manufacturers have successfully developed a process for using aluminium in the manufacture of wallpaper. As manufactured at present, the paper is made of commercially pure aluminium, rolled and backed upon stiff paper. The design is then stamped upon the aluminium surface, the impression of the stamping going through the backing paper. The colouring and embossing processes are said to give satisfactory results, but so far the manufacturers have been unable to overcome a gaudy, metallic effect in the finished paper.

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The municipal authorities of Agram (Zagreb) are in negotiation with a group of Swiss banks for a loan of Dinar 200,000,000 to be expended on public works and for similar purposes. Should a loan of this kind eventually be arranged, it should

without doubt be of considerable benefit to Swiss manufacturing industries, since it is almost certain that some stipulation as to the acceptance of tenders from Swiss contracting firms will be included in the agreement.

The firm of Brown Boveri, in Baden, announce that they are closing down their foundry business, as the space occupied by this department of their works is required for extension of their machinery and engineering shops. It is expected that the firm of Gebr. Sulzer will take over a great part of the foundry business and that they will in consequence re-open their foundry in Buelach, which has been closed down for some time past.

The A.G. der Maschinenfabriken Escher Wyss & Cie, Zurich, closed the year 1925/26 with a net loss of Frs. 223,470. This could, however, be covered out of the surplus carried forward from the preceding year. In the report it is pointed out that contrary to expectations, conditions became even worse during the year under review. Unemployment and the general trade depression were still acute and the firm had the greatest difficulty in finding markets for its goods. Prices had often to be accepted which barely covered costs, though it is noted that even at a higher price the Swiss goods were often preferred on account of their high quality.

Another important Swiss engineering firm, the Schweizerische Lokomotiv- und Maschinenfabrik, in Winterthur, shows better results for the year ending June 30th, 1926. There is a net profit of Frs. 1,306,000, approximately the same as that of the year before, and a dividend of 7 per cent. is again to be paid on the share capital of 12 million francs. The firm are working on a large contract for supplying electric locomotives to the Swiss Federal Railways and have also fulfilled orders from the Rhätische Bahn, the Japanese State Railways, the Dutch State Railways for Sumatra, the Chilean-Transandine, and other lines.

For the year to the end of June, 1926, the sugar works at Aarberg—the Zuckerfabrik und Raffinerie Aarberg A.G.—showed a net profit of Frs. 82,307 against Frs. 89,008 a year before, and 6 per cent. dividend was again paid.

The Linoleum A.G. in Giubiasco (Tessin), whose shares have for some time past been quoted regularly in these columns, closed the year 1925/26 with a net profit of Frs. 168,327 as compared with Frs. 172,296 a year earlier. 5 per cent. dividend is being paid on the share capital of Frs. 3,000,000.

The Banque pour Entreprises Electriques in Zurich proposes to pay a dividend of 9 per cent. for the year 1925/26 as compared with 8 per cent. a year previously.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

	BONDS.	Oct. 12		Oct. 19	
		Frs.	Frs.	Frs.	Frs.
Confederation 3% 1903		79.50	79.75		
" 5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln ...		101.67	101.60		
Federal Railways 3½% A—K ...		83.95	83.97		
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln. ...		101.50	101.50		
	SHARES.	Nom.	Oct. 12	Oct. 19	
		Frs.	Frs.	Frs.	
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	792	785		
Crédit Suisse	500	818	823		
Union de Banques Suisses	500	600	605		
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2385	2385		
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3950	3875		
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000	2830	2650		
S.A. Brown Boveri	350	513	497		
C. F. Bally	1000	1179	1230		
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	551	446		
Entreprises Sulzer S.A.	1000	1017	972		
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	545	545		
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	100	94	94		
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	800	780		

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