

Home news

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TERRIBLE ORAGE EN AJOIE.

Vendredi à 19 h., un orage d'une grande violence s'est abattu sur la Baroche. A Vendlincourt, une trombe d'eau accompagnée d'un fort vent a transporté une centaine de mètres cubes de terre et de boue d'un bois situé près du bâtiment des douanes sur des terres cultivées, qui présentent un aspect lamentable. Les récoltes sont détruites. Il y a cinquante ans, le même phénomène s'était déjà produit à cet endroit.

UN DRAME A LA CHAUX-DE-FONDS

Vendredi après-midi, le 7 juin : une mère de famille a jeté ses quatre enfants dans l'étang dit "Crueux-Perdu", près de la ville. La mère se jeta ensuite elle-même dans la mare, mais, grâce aux prompts secours, les cinq personnes ont pu être retirées encore vivantes et ont été conduites à l'hôpital.

UN FILOU SE CONSTITUE PRISONNIER.

M. le juge d'instruction Foex avait décerné il y a quelques jours, un mandat international contre un sieur Gaston Ch., représentant de commerce, inculpé de détournements au préjudice de la maison Kimmerlé, rue de Lausanne.

Ch., qui avait pris la fuite et avait passé la frontière, s'est constitué prisonnier mardi matin. Dans un premier interrogatoire, il a reconnu avoir commis pour 30 000 fr. environ de détournements ou d'escroqueries, soit 6000 fr. de détournements au préjudice de la maison Kimmerlé, 8000 à 9000 francs de chèques sans provision et une escroquerie de 15 000 fr. commise à Chamoni. Ch. a ajouté qu'il avait perdu au jeu la plus grande partie de cette somme.

LE CENTENAIRE DE BENJAMIN CONSTANT

On sait quelle réussite éblouissante vient d'être le centenaire de Victor Cherbuliez, et qu'il a permis aux écrivains genevois d'attirer chez nous des écrivains français.

Encouragée par ce succès, et désireuse plus que jamais de favoriser de semblables rapprochements, la Classe des beaux-arts se propose de célébrer, le printemps prochain, le centenaire de Benjamin Constant qui, né en 1767, est mort en 1830.

Ce sera, si l'on songe aux rapports de Genève avec le château de Coppet et de Benjamin Constant avec l'une et l'autre, la fête du romantisme en Suisse française.

Et, peut-être, la Classe des beaux-arts, dont le projet a déjà reçu les plus flatteuses adhésions, trouvera-t-elle le moyen d'ériger un monument à l'auteur d'*Adolphe* dans la ville qui fut pour lui, à plusieurs reprises, un lieu de séjour et un centre d'études.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KIBURG.

'Lac Leman,' 'Lac Anglais,' 'Lake of Tears,'—which?

The *Evening Standard* recently had a truly interesting article entitled "Britain's Lost Legions," by R. H. Bruce Lockhart:

Time was when Lake Geneva was the loveliest of pilgrimages for Englishmen. Every young man, setting out on the grand tour, included in his itinerary those narcissus-clad shores where Protestantism and the French Revolution were born, where Rousseau wrote his Social Contract, where Byron and Shelley loved to linger, where Gibbon wooed in vain the lovely Suzanne Chuchod, and consoled himself by writing the Decline and Fall, where Madame Récamier and Madame de Stael held court, and where the tragic and beautiful Empress of Austria sought a peaceful refuge from the pompous trammels of the Viennese Court, until the awl of a shoemaker assassin ended her life.

To-day, the laughing throng of young English girls and boys, who in their thousands travel to Switzerland every year, has no thought for the sun-kissed glories of this jewel among lakes. Speed has made them blind to beauty, and, laden with skis, skates and luges, they make their way to England's new playing grounds in the mountains.

The lake, however, has become more English than ever, until to-day it shares pride of place with the Channel Islands, the Italian and French Riviera, and the coast of Normandy and Brittany as the home of England's lost legions.

These lost legions are the new poor who have imposed on themselves a voluntary exile in order to avoid the taxation of a rapacious government. What their numbers are must be a matter for conjecture. Probably their total European strength is not far short of half-a-million. On the shores of Lake Geneva alone they number several thousands.

New Swiss Electric Power Station.

Switzerland marching at the head of all nations, as far as the exploitation of Electricity is concerned, is shortly beginning work on a new Power Station. From *The Times* (20th May):

Work will begin soon in the Val des Dix, south of Sion, in the Valais, in preparation for the erection of a large hydro-electric plant.

A dam across the higher part of the valley will make it possible to form an artificial lake

containing about 150,000,000 cubic feet of water. The water accumulated in the lake, and that supplied by the Dixence torrent, will be led through pipes to the Rhône Valley, where, after a fall of 5,300ft., it will drive the turbines of a power station situated near Champsec. It is estimated that the station will yield some 120,000 kilowatts, and that the cost of construction, which is likely to occupy three years, will be nearly £2,400,000.

162-Year-old Piano of Swiss make.

From the *Star* (18th May):

One of the three oldest pianos in America belongs to a 14-year-old girl, Sara E. Criedler, of Chandler, Oklahoma, says the British United Press.

The instrument was made in Switzerland in 1767. It has a keyboard with a compass of only five octaves. The soft "pedal" is operated by hand and is placed on the player's left.

Of the other two pianos of the same date, one is in the Metropolitan Museum and the other in a house in Mount Vernon, once the residence of George Washington.

Golf in the Snows

(*Burton Evening Gazette* 24th May)

The remarkable growth in popularity of golf in Switzerland within the last ten years is at once a tribute to British sporting influence and to that marvellous adaptability to tourist needs that has made Switzerland the foremost holiday country of the world.

To-day in many parts of Switzerland the golf bag is in summer as familiar a feature, both with natives and with visitors, as the alpenstock.

Switzerland's twenty-six magnificent courses are to be found at her principal resorts. Mountainous topography has presented no difficulties to the course architects. Rather has it aided their task. For even at 4,000 feet in the Alps—open undulating, grassy plateaux are to be found which enable the best type of course to be laid out amid superb mountain scenery.

Foreigners are allowed to take part in all the competitions organised by the Swiss Golf Association. It is this which gives to Swiss golf such a pleasantly exciting international character. And mountain grass for greens—one can do prodigies with a putter there!

Zürich Millenary Celebration

(*The Times* 25th May)

The town of Zurich, the largest in Switzerland, is this year celebrating with appropriate festivities the millenary of its foundation. Lake dwelling remains prove that the site of Zurich was inhabited in prehistoric times, and at the time of the Romans there existed on the spot a fortress named Turicum. The first regular settlement was in 929. From an early date Zurich was the intellectual centre of German-speaking Switzerland. It was the home of the reformator Ulrich Zwingli, and became the focus of the Reformation movement in Eastern Switzerland. It is now the centre of the silk and machinery industry. From 1400 to 1800 the population of the town increased from 8,000 to 30,000; it was 94,000 in 1888, and it has now reached 227,000.

It is not easy at all to think of human beings living in Switzerland, building villages and yet not knowing anything about agriculture and cattle-rearing. And yet, such folks lived there, in many parts, and they are referred to in the following from *The Observer* 26th May.

Lake-dwellings in Switzerland.

As a recent examination of its banks has shown, the Lake of Constance must have been greatly in favour with the lake-dwellers. The remains of no fewer than forty-eight different villages have been discovered, in the water as well as in the adjoining fields. Ten thousand years ago the surface of the water must have been a dozen feet higher than it is to-day.

One of these villages has been reconstructed for some years and can be visited. It is situated near Uhensdorf on the German bank. Another, near Sipplingen, is being dug out and reconstructed now. It dates back to a time when man was unacquainted with agriculture and cattle-rearing. The finds are exceptionally rich.

Owing to the projected regulation of the lake, which will render research work much more difficult, the next three years will see the palaeologists very busy at work all round the lake.

Since that time, and more especially so, of late years, progress has been swift in Switzerland and where our fore-fathers thought they had done very well by guarding their habitations as much as possible against avalanches, fire and other calamities, our modern compatriots go further and take to

Insuring against rain

(*Manchester Guardian Commercial* 23rd May)

The introduction of insurance against rain in Switzerland marks a new departure for the assurance business in this country. The initiative has been taken by the Allgemei-

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