

# Notes and gleanings

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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### NEW BRITISH MINISTER AT BERNE.

The King has approved the following appointment in the Diplomatic Service:

Mr. George Redston Warner, a Counsellor in the Foreign Office, to be Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Berne.

Mr. Warner, who is a son of the late Sir Joseph Warner, entered the Foreign Office in 1903, and has served in the legations at Tangier and Oslo. He is 55, and was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. He received the C.M.G. in 1927.

#### OFFICIAL DAY AT THE COMPTOIR SUISSE.

The official day at the Comptoir Suisse in Lausanne took place on the 13th of this month. Amongst the many guests were M. Pilet-Golaz, President of the Swiss Confederation and delegations from the Federal Chambers. At a Banquet held, the President of the Swiss Confederation congratulated the Management of the Fair on their enterprise, he voiced his regrets at the erecting of tariff walls by many foreign countries, which unfortunately compelled our country to accept similar measures, he expressed the hope that the future might bring a change, and that the harmful restrictions which are hampering world trade would be modified for the benefit of all countries.

#### LEAGUE BUDGET.

The League Budget for 1935, amounting to 14,876,024 Swiss francs, was adopted. It was decided that the Secretary-General should be given full liberty in the matters of recruiting staffs and rationalizing salaries.

A special committee was formed under the auspices of the Nansen Refugee Commission for the purpose of drafting precise proposals for the relief of the Russian refugee women in China. It was stated that there are some 2,000 in Shanghai alone and 3,000 in other parts of China.

#### COMMEMORATION SERVICE FOR THE SWISS FLYING CORPS.

On the occasion of the Federal Thanksgiving day, a commemoration service was held in Berne, to celebrate the 20th anniversary since the foundation of the Swiss Military Aviation Corps. Amongst the participants at this service, were Federal Councillor Minger, head of the Federal Military Dept., Army-Corps Commander Roost, chief of the General Staff, Army-Corps Commander Guisan, Division Commanders Hilfer, Bridel, Tissot, de Diesbach and de Muralt, Colonels Fierz and Isler.

The sermon was held by Army Chaplain, Captain Epprecht. Major Meier-Müller, President of the "Avia" welcomed the distinguished visitors, and pointed out the importance which the Flying Corps has attained during the last twenty years.

Colonel Bardet, the commander of the Swiss Flying Corps, gave a vivid picture of the work done and the progress made. He said that in 1914 the Swiss Army possessed only eleven machines and 10 pilots, to-day 250 machines are in use with a personnel of 240 pilots. At the end of the war the Flying Corps had 70 machines and eighty pilots. In 1929 there were 200 officers, 500 non commissioned officers and 2,250 privates enlisted in the Flying Corps. During the 20 years 50 pilots lost their lives in the service of their country. Federal Councillor Minger expressed the thanks of the Government for the splendid services rendered by the Swiss Military aviators.

### GERMANY APOLOGISES TO SWITZERLAND.

The German Government has apologised to Switzerland following the Swiss Government's protest in connection with a recent case of attempted bomb smuggling from Germany to Austria through Swiss territory.

A motor boat, carrying 30 explosive charges with detonators, was seized near the outlet of the Rhine, from Lake Constance, in July, and three members of the Nazi-Austrian Legion were arrested.

In a note to the Swiss Government, which is published, the German Foreign Minister says his Government deeply regrets the incident and has taken the necessary measures to ensure that the persons implicated, "as far as they are to be found on German soil," shall answer for their acts.

Steps had also been taken to prevent a repetition of the incident. The German note adds that an inquiry was instituted on first news of the attempt.

The Swiss Federal Council now considers the incident closed.

### UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES IN SWITZERLAND.

According to figures issued, there were 52,147 unemployed at the end of August, or nearly 3,000 more than at the end of July.

### SINGER BARRED FROM SWITZERLAND.

The well-known Alsatian singer, Marianne Oswald, has been prohibited by Federal decree from entering Swiss territory. In July last she appeared at the Comédie Theatre in Geneva and her songs were such as to call forth protests from non-Communist members of the audience.

The Socialist head of the Geneva Government, M. Léon Nicole, who is also chief of the Department of Justice and Police, took it upon himself personally to order the arrest of certain demonstrators, including M. Eugène Fabre, the editor of "La Suisse," one of the chief morning papers in Geneva.

The Swiss Federal Government has taken the course of avoiding difficulty in the future by prohibiting Mlle. Oswald's entry into Switzerland.

### LOCAL.

#### ZÜRICH.

An electric locomotive was derailed at the station of Birmensdorf (Zurich) having struck a large empty barrel which was placed on the track. An investigation has been opened as to how the barrel found its way on to the line.

The Swiss Socialist Party at a meeting at Zurich on Tuesday last rejected the proposal made by the Communist Party to form a common front.

A large fire partly destroyed the buildings of an important Dairy at Staefa, the damage caused is estimated to exceed 75,000 frs.

M. Specker, head of the banking firm of the same name, who was under arrest for fraudulent bankrupt was found dead in his cell. He died through heart failure.

#### BERNE.

Dr. Mathilde Theyssin celebrated, last Sunday, her 96th birthday anniversary in Berne. Dr. Theyssin was the first lady doctor who practised in Europe. She studied medicine at the Paris Sorbonne, and later on took over a practice at Strassburg. In the 'seventies she went to Japan and China.

The Hotel Regina, at the Beatenberg, was burned down last week; fortunately few guests were left at the Hotel owing to the season being over. The cause of the fire has not yet been ascertained. The damage is considered to be heavy.

### CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd

for the

ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL

at the

Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W.1.

Admission by ticket only, obtainable from Members of the Committee.

From Berne comes the news of the death of M. Gottlieb Gafner, formerly Manager of the Swiss National Bank in Berne, at the age of 70. M. Gafner was brought up at Thun, where he was apprenticed to the Banking profession. Until 1907 he was with the "Kantonal Bank" at Thun, in the same year he was appointed Manager of the National Bank in Berne. In the army M. Gafner reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. (Infantry), and for many years he was President of the "Handels und Industrieverein," of the canton of Berne.

#### SCHWYZ.

The Palace Hotel at Engelberg, was completely destroyed by fire on Tuesday last, but the few occupants escaped unhurt.

#### GLARUS.

M. Joseph Jakob-Spieler has died at Glarus at the age of 79; he deceased was the founder of the ski manufacturing industry in the canton of Glarus, and his firm enjoyed a great reputation throughout Switzerland.

#### BASLE.

The Basle painter, Rudolf Hübscher, has died at the age of 36, he was an artist of great repute, and his early death is greatly deplored by his many friends and admirers.

#### AARGAU.

Lieutenant-Colonel Simmen-Bircher has died at Aarau at the age of 41. M. Simmen entered the General Staff with the rank of captain and was later on promoted to major. In 1930/32 he commanded the Battalion 60 and on his advancement to lieutenant-colonel he was at the head of the 24th regiment.

#### ST. GALLEN.

Dr. Fritz Heizmann, Sub-Manager of the Banque Populaire in St. Gall, has been appointed Manager of the "Solothurnischen Leihkasse" in Solothurn.

#### VALAIS.

M. Casili, a former President of the community of Challais near Sierre, drank by mistake out of a bottle containing a solution of nicotine destined for spraying vines, and died of poisoning.

#### VAUD.

Two non commissioned officers travelling from Montreux to Lausanne, came into contact with one of the electric masts and were killed outright. Their names are Henchoz and Rouillier. An investigation into the accident has been ordered by the authorities.

## NOTES and GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

The following gleaning from the British Press strikes me as very interesting.

### My Swiss Journey to the Microphone: A Day that passed like a Film:

" Leeds Mercury " 4/9/34.

Thinking it over, I find the day I went to Lausanne, to give a broadcast from the great Sottens transmitter, has become already a little unreal... You know how it is when you come to a day crowded with new scenes and novel events. It unrolls like a film. Moments of astonishment and beauty flicker past, replaced at once by something still more striking. When it is over you wish you could go through it again, more slowly.

Yes, that was a wonderful day, a cinematic day. I owe some of the best of it to Commander Studd, D.S.O., managing director of the Polytechnic Touring Association, whose chalets at Lucerne were the "Mercury" party's holiday home. He insisted on motor-ing me from Lucerne to Lausanne, by an indirect route planned to take in the most magnificent scenery.

For almost eight hours, and for some 150 miles, we travelled through constantly changing loveliness. We had long spells of brilliant sunshine that transformed the snow peaks, far off, into what seemed to be a delicate mirage in the blue sky.

Sometimes we climbed under the wildest of storm light that made the mountains a hundredfold more savage than Wuthering Heights at their gloomiest.

First, with a smiling good-bye from the "Mercury" party at the Seeburg Chalets, we sped South between Pilatus and Lake Lucerne and made for the Brünig Pass.

The road was good, though not up to the best British standard. Soon we came in sight of the brooding waters of Brienzsee.

The forests looked gloomy under grey clouds, and I feared that we should be denied that lovely view of the Jungfrau which you should get from Interlaken. But luck was with us. As we came to that gay resort (dear to me from a memory of thirty years ago) we saw the shapely figure of the Jungfrau gleaming with celestial grace. Now we made for Latterbach and then up the Jaun Pass, reeling off the miles on the almost empty country roads. Mountains and forests kept me silent with enjoyment.

We stopped for lunch at Gstaad, that fortunate resort which claims to offer the best ski-ing in Switzerland. The air, fresh off the ice, made one long to stay here for mountain walks. It made me feel like a man of 21, good for tramping 40 miles a day. We were told that Gstaad had had a good season, largely because fashionable Egyptians had stayed there.

Imagine a golden valley, sheltered by forest-clad mountains, and shining Alps above them. Imagine everything sparkling and exhilarating, and with a sort of Grimm's fairy tale atmosphere, and perhaps you will have an inkling of what Gstaad is like, a quiet Harrogate in a golden bowl of the Alps.

So far we had been in German-speaking Switzerland, but the purring car engine now hastened us to the French-speaking parts. Gsteig sounded German enough. In a few moments we were climbing towards the Col de Pillon, and all around us were French place-names. As we breasted the top of the pass we ran into a curious change of scene. We had been climbing slowly through mist, in which we heard the music of cowbells from the invisible slopes below us. We might have been in some primeval forest, far from any other people, but as we reached the top we found ourselves surrounded by a medley of police, bright blue uniforms, motor cars, and newspaper sellers.

A man hastened to us with a Paris evening paper offering an account of the Tour de Suisse bicycle race. All was excitement and shouting. The Tour de Suisse is one of the great events of the year in Switzerland. The competitors, on their long and exhausting course, taking in some of the chief towns and famous passes of their country, were expected here soon.

On we pressed, past gathering spectators, towards Aigle, swept by rain. We passed under the famous mountain village of Leysin, where so many people go for medicinal sun-bathing. Now we came in sight of the Lake of Geneva and found the streets of Montreux, despite increasing rain, were full of spectators for the race.

Montreux looked very French and fashionable; I was astonished to find how magnificent were the buildings here and at the lakeside towns of Vevey and Lausanne. Until the present depression began, Switzerland basked in prosperity. Here you see the more decorative side of our civilisation expressed in the most modern concrete buildings, with sun terraces that look like promenade decks on a liner.

One of our pleasant interludes was a visit to the Castle of Chillon, a grim pile by the water.

We stayed at Vevey for tea with Commander Studd's wife, Lady Kathleen Studd, in a chalet commanding wonderful views. Then on to Lausanne, where at six o'clock our journey ended.

Here I called at once at the wireless studio. Since talking over the telephone from Leeds to officials at Zurich I had made some alterations in the manuscript to bring it up-to-date, and wanted to get them passed in accordance with B.B.C. practice. But what a difference there is between the Swiss radio methods and those of the B.B.C.! I walked into the studios, with no commissionaire to stop me, and found myself in a long corridor that was partly a waiting room.

From a loud speaker a man's voice was booming excitedly against a background of cheering crowd. It was an eye-witness description of the Tour de Suisse.

A young lady, dark and spectacled, came to see who we were. I found this was Mademoiselle Golay, whose deep musical voice you may have heard announcing, for it is almost as striking as that of the famous woman announcer of Italy.

I explained that I wanted to have my manuscript passed. Mlle. Golay, all animation and verve, gave a glance at the new manuscript and said that would be all right.

"You have not put in any advertisements?" she asked.

"No," I said. "No direct advertising whatever."

She smiled, and shrugged that question aside.

"Would you like to see the talk studio?" "I would."

The studio walls were covered with crimson. The room shone with light. There was a biggish table with a moveable microphone and a very good clock. It all looked bright and theatrical after the austere appointments of the B.B.C. studios in Leeds.

I suggested a voice test. Mlle. Golay shrugged it aside. "Oh, no," she said. "That will be all right. If you speak too loud or if you speak too softly I shall hand you a note to say so, but I am sure our amplifier will do all that is necessary."

A telephone bell rang. Mlle. Golay answered rapidly and competently. She is accustomed to answering the everlasting question, "What shall I do?" She reassured the inquirer, beamed upon me confidently, and began to speak of the Tour de Suisse, as you and I might speak of the St. Leger.

So Commander Studd and I went to dinner, greatly taken with the easy ways of the studio, and Mlle. Golay's darting, many-sided competence.

Our B.B.C. studio at Leeds is like a temple of science. This studio at Lausanne was thea-

trical. Photographs of famous people were posted on the walls of the waiting room. The spirit of the place was that of a green room.

When I returned a little before ten, after an excellent dinner, which included turkey, a dance orchestra was in full swing with "Night and Day." Mlle. Golay smiled upon us and kept dashing to the announce-microphone in the orchestral studio, coming out to greet people and to see that everyone was present and correct. At 9.59 she ushered me into the crimson room. At 10 she announced me in French and then in English.

A curious feeling grew upon me as I spoke. In the blaze of light in the crimson studio I was tempted to be oratorical instead of conversational. It was very different from the effect of the study atmosphere which the B.B.C. fosters. I had to try hard to make myself talk, and not orate.

When I had finished and Mlle. Golay's golden voice had said good-night to the world, she told me conditions had been good and there was no doubt London would hear me clearly. So out once more into the wet night to the Hotel Mirabeau, there to sleep in a powder-blue room, with bed and furniture ivory coloured, chromium fittings, and a polished wood floor, and an adjoining white-tiled bathroom. Swiss landscapes decorated the walls, and above my head an angel choir breathed a blessing.

## MY FLIGHT.

By ST.

(Continuation).

This time I continued my journey in a small Fokker machine belonging to the "Alpar Bern," a Swiss Company which was founded five years ago. This concern, although quite young in years, has made great strides, and year after year has considerably extended its services.

With great expectations I boarded the machine, which was to take me to my native town, this time I was the only passenger as far as Bienne, where an intermediate landing was effected. The short journey from Basle to Bienne, taking only about a quarter of an hour was beautiful, far in the distance the whole chain of the Bernese Oberland was visible, whilst underneath the heights of the Jura mountains were spread out in majestic glory. Back to my mind came those 1914/15 days when I kept watch together with my comrades in arms in the Jura; far from above I could recognise towns and hamlets through which we used to pass in those critical times.

Suddenly there came into sight the lakes of Neuchâtel, Murten and Bienne, an unforgettable sight, over hills and valleys we were speeding along. The St. Peter's island, where I used to spend my holidays as a youth awakened in me happy memories of carefree times long since passed. For miles and miles one could see vineyards and forests, rivers and green fields. This was indeed an earthly paradise. At Bienne we picked up some passengers, and after a halt of barely two minutes we took the air to approach the capital of Switzerland.



In front there was the majestic chain of the Alps, I could discern the threatening pyramid of the Finsteraarhorn; the Mönch, Eiger and Jungfrau as well as the Blüemlisalp forming a massive group; and further back as a faint line I could locate the Valaisian Alps. Not a cloud spoilt this heavenly picture, it was a view which I shall cherish as long as I live, I was immensely proud of my beautiful little country. I have travelled along the Riviera, I have admired the beautiful Bay at Genoa, seen from the heights of the Campo Santo. I have wandered along the

Rhine from Cologne to Mainz, I have "hiked" in the lovely Schwarzwald, admired the coasts of Brittany and Normandy, and nearer home, Cornwall, South Wales and Devon, but none of these glories of nature have impressed me half as much as this wonderful flight over this lovely countryside with its green hills, valleys and lakes towered over by the snow clad Alps, and silvery glaciers.

A feeling of immense happiness filled my heart, this world is so beautiful, why must we make it so hard for each other to enjoy life? why should there be wars, why should we ever embitter our lives with petty jealousies and class hatred when we could each of us live happy and content in God's beautiful nature!! Every thing earthly seemed to me so petty so devoid of any grandeur.

But there was no time for further reflections, in the distance appeared the steeple of the Minster of Berne, we were following the windings of the River Aare, and next I could see the Federal Palais, on which the Swiss flag was hoisted, as it was the 1st of August, the National Day of the Swiss Confederation. And now we were right over the town, I could see the house where my dear ones dwelt, I saw scores of places which I have visited during the last few years, they were greeting me like old friends, the humming of the engines sounded to me like a symphony of love. Home, back home, what a feeling of joy, I felt like jumping out to embrace my native soil, but reason prevailed, and after all I am a Bernois, and we are used to take things rather slowly. We were now nearing the picturesque Aerodrome on the Belpmoos, the engines were shut off, and in a slow-glide we landed. I could hardly realise that on the same morning,

I was still in London, and barely 5 hours later I was almost in the heart of Switzerland. On alighting from the machine, I had the great pleasure of meeting M. H. Pillichody, Manager of the "Alpar Bern," and one of Switzerland's foremost pilots. Here as before I was greatly impressed by the courtesy of all the officials, right down from pilots to the smallest office clerk, I found nothing but courtesy, right from Crocydon, Le Bourget, Basle and Berne. These "Air" people are indeed as fine a set of men as I have ever met.

The return journey, which I undertook three days later was every bit as enjoyable, and this my first trip into the ether will be one of my most treasured experiences, and I can heartily recommend a flight to Switzerland to all of my readers, I am convinced they will enjoy it as much as I did.

"In dem lichten Schweben  
Ahnen wir ein ewig' Leben.—  
Flügel rauschen leis im Wind —  
Schwingen trägst Du, Erdenkind!