

Short wave transmissions from Switzerland

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treprise, tous ces graves obstacles purent être également surmontés.

Charles Etzel, qui a dirigé la construction de la ligne du Brenner et dont le nom est intimement lié aussi à l'histoire des chemins de fer suisses, était originaire de Heilbronn en Wurtemberg. Ingénieur de chemin de fer, il travailla à la construction des chemins de fer de banlieue de Paris et de Milan. Plus tard, il vint en Suisse. Il a même été un certain temps directeur du chemin de fer Central suisse. C'est lui qui donna l'idée de construire les deux gares de Bâle, la gare centrale, point de jonction avec la compagnie française des Chemins de fer de l'Est et d'Alsace-Lorraine, et l'ancienne gare badoise à Petit-Bâle (aujourd'hui Basel D.R.), établissant la jonction avec les chemins de fer badois. Charles Etzel fut en outre consulté à propos de la construction de divers chemins de fer dans notre pays. Cependant, son œuvre de prédilection fut la ligne du Brenner, à laquelle il consacra ses dernières années, et qui a une grosse dette de reconnaissance envers lui.

Un tragique destin voulut qu'il succombât, le 2 mai 1865, des suites d'une crise cardiaque, avant que fût terminée son œuvre capitale. A bien des égards, son destin ressemble à celui de Louis Favre, constructeur du tunnel du Saint-Gothard. Ni l'un ni l'autre n'ont pu contempler leur œuvre achevée. La mort de Charles Etzel porta un rude coup à l'entreprise. Pourtant, grâce à ses travaux préparatoires, ses collaborateurs, s'inspirant de ses conceptions, purent mener à bonne fin la construction.

Le nouveau chemin de fer joua rapidement le rôle qui lui était dévolu. Le lac de Garde et la pittoresque Vérone, ainsi que Venise, exercèrent bientôt un puissant attrait sur les amateurs d'excursions. Mais ici encore la guerre a entraîné un changement radical. L'époque des voyages de plaisir est close, tout au moins pour le moment. Aujourd'hui, la ligne du Brenner, voie de communication de premier ordre, sert presque exclusivement à des buts militaires.

(Bulletin des C.F.F. No. 11.)

SHORT WAVE TRANSMISSIONS FROM SWITZERLAND.

We hear from Berne that the Swiss Radio has begun a new service on the wave-length 47.28 metres called Les petites Nouvelles du Pays at 18.00 G.M.T. (60°c). The usual programme from 8.50 to 9.45 is still being sent out. The Radio Diffusion Suisse would welcome it if compatriots in this country would let them have comments on the reception in their part of the world from time to time, as this would enable them to improve the transmissions.

The Swiss Observer would be very glad to forward any forthcoming observations from our readers, so please write to us.

THE SWISS FEDERAL TRIBUNAL.

By Federal Judge DR. HANS HUBER, Lausanne.

(For the translation of this article we are indebted to C. J. Bernheim, Esq.)

Everyone is happy not to have anything to do with the Courts of Justice. Yet, as citizens of a democratic state, we cannot remain indifferent as to how Justice is being administered in the Confederation and to whom its enforcement is being entrusted. The respect of the Law is one of the most important principles of a State. As, however, this respect of the Law must show itself in the first place in the administration of Justice, even the existence of a State might sometimes depend on whether or not the judicial authorities are equal to their high duties.

The Swiss Federal Tribunal is a conception of the Federal Constitution of May 29th, 1874. Before that date our country possessed only a non-permanent Tribunal, with but a limited jurisdiction, which assembled comparatively seldom and in different localities and to which also the member of the National Assembly could belong.

Just as the National Assembly represents the legislative authority and the Federal Council acts as the administrative and executive power, so does the Federal Tribunal stand for the supreme judicial authority in the country. In these three highest authorities of our state organisation is embodied the principle of the division of power. None of them is subordinated in any way to the others in the execution of its duties. It follows therefore that neither the National nor the States Council is entitled to interfere in the administration of justice although it is these two bodies, jointly acting as National Assembly, which elect the members of the Federal Tribunal. The Federal Council does not exert any control over it neither. Nevertheless, the Federal Tribunal submits every year an annual report to the National Assembly in which it gives information regarding the number of cases dealt with and the way they have been settled.

At the present time the Federal Tribunal consists of 26 Members. In case of need their number can be increased to 28 without necessitating any change of the statute. The Federal Judges are elected for a period of six years and, on the occasion of their first election, they are solemnly sworn in. After their first period in office, they are generally re-elected until old age or ill-health causes them to retire. They must devote the whole of their time to their charge and are not allowed to hold any other office of profit nor even to sit on the board of any company. Moreover, a Federal Judge cannot be a member of the Federal, National or States Councils or a judge of the Federal Insurance Tribunal at Lucerne. The Judges may, however, give their services to the State as judicial experts in the framing of new legislation. Likewise, it has happened during the war that the Federal Council has asked individual members of the Federal Tribunal to act as Chairmen of newly created Appeal Commissions.

The members of the Federal Tribunal are obliged to live in Lausanne or its environs. They absolve their military duties in the same way as every other citizen. Among them are to be found not only Colonels but also N.C.O.s and even ordinary privates. Often it happens that the Officers amongst them act as Judges in the military Courts. The higher officials and secretaries

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