

# Correspondence

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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The voting on the proposed Capital Levy, which took place last Sunday, showed a tremendous majority against this radical proposal. The participation of the voters constituted a record, only about 15 per cent. of those entitled to vote abstaining from polling; of the 882,000 voters in Switzerland, over 840,000 went to the polling stations. From the figures so far published the votes recorded represent 84.4% of the total electorate.

As will be noticed from the table herewith, every one of the cantons has refused the capital levy, the majorities in some instances being phenomenal:

	Yes	No
Zurich	19847	100026
Berne	20940	132317
Lucerne	2260	39086
Uri	334	4469
Schwyz	454	12686
Obwalden	78	3971
Nidwalden	57	3008
Glarus	413	7023
Zug	748	6208
Fribourg	1114	33657
Solothurn	4016	24085
Basle-Town	7534	19812
Basle-Land	2535	14218
Schaffhausen	2011	8818
Appenzell A.-Rh.	1108	11053
Appenzell I.-Rh.	66	3042
St. Gall	6274	56045
Grisons	1830	21504
Aargau	9188	45624
Thurgau	2773	26000
Ticino	4326	20427
Vaud	7475	65868
Valais	1495	28071
Neuchâtel	5578	23057
Geneva	7134	21763
Total	109641	733892

An interesting study is also supplied by the following table, which shows the voting in some of the large towns. It should be remembered that Basle, Berne and Zurich, especially the first-named, were considered as strongholds of extreme Socialism, and the great defeat of this section has even staggered those who predicted the victory of the bourgeois. It may be stated that the workers even in the great industrial centres rejected with no uncertain voice the proposed measure:

Town of	Yes	No
Berne	6454	15405
Zurich	10211	31882
Winterthur	2101	9245
Lucerne	1434	6325
Olten	376	1769
St. Gall	2254	10957
Solothurn	341	2215
Glarus	72	990
Lugano	278	1685
Lausanne	2837	10274
Chaux-de-Fonds	2237	5336

The demand for the Initiative was at the time signed by 86,500 Socialists (the minimum number required being 50,000), and this high figure gave rise to the conclusion that the Bill would find a considerable measure of support amongst the electorate.

In spite of their intensive propaganda, supported by the printers' strike, which somewhat handicapped the issue of literature from the opposing side, the parties of the Left were unable to muster more than about 23,000 additional supporters.

The result of the voting was received all over Switzerland with enthusiastic expressions of satisfaction. In some places guns were fired.

In the London Colony the approximate result was known early on Sunday night, Mr. Paravicini having been kind enough to pass along over the telephone his official telegraphic information.

The Swiss Minister despatched the following telegram to Berne at 8 p.m. on Sunday:

"Président Confédération, Berne.

"Je vous envoie les félicitations chaleureuses de la Colonie suisse à Londres pour magnifique résultat votation populaire."

## FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The results of last Sunday's vote on the capital levy fully justified the optimistic attitude which had throughout been maintained in financial circles. The emphatic nature of the levy's rejection was, however, a welcome surprise, and the tone of confidence which results should have an excellent effect on the financial markets. Stock Exchange dealings on Monday showed clearly that the results of the vote had already been fully discounted. In fact, there was rather a selling tendency, and values declined slightly. The London exchange, which on Saturday had been quoted 24.09-24.13 in Zurich, rose again on Monday to 23.92-23.98, a movement which could only be attributed to the referendum result. The National Bank's last statement showed a further increase of over 71 millions in the note circulation. It will be interesting to see how the position now develops.

The preliminary figures of the trade returns for the nine months ending September 30th show that Switzerland's import for the period aggregated 3,616,513 tons, valued at 1,356,256,149 frs. The corresponding returns last year showed 2,898,309 tons, valued at 1,741,407,032 frs. Against this the exports amounted to 551,862 tons, to the value of 1,318,046,813 frs. Corresponding exports in 1921 amounted to 408,127 tons, of the value of 1,639,439,648 frs. These figures show in a very satisfactory degree how Switzerland's trade balance has improved in her favour since last year and in a still more striking degree since before the war.

Reference was recently made in these columns to the disappearance of the firm of Stander from the ranks of the Swiss embroidery industry. A further regrettable loss has now been sustained by the entry into liquidation of William Meyer & Co., of St. Gall. The firm was founded in 1885. The firm, together with its New York selling company, has been in difficulties for some years, and the creation of a limited company, with a capital of a million francs, which was carried through a year ago, failed to bring with it any improvement.

As has already been recorded, the accounts of Adolphe Saurer S.A. in Arbau for the year 1921-22 closed with a net profit of 65,381 frs., carried forward to the new year. The report emphasises the difficulty of finding markets for the company's products. It is good to hear, however, that there have been good sales of motor-cars in Switzerland, and that orders have been received from the Postal authorities for a number of cars for the Alpine postal routes. The company's other speciality is the manufacture of textile and embroidery machinery, and here the outlets have been badly curtailed owing to the depressed state of the markets for embroidery in the United States and the difficulties of trading with Italy and Poland owing to the exchange. France, on the other hand, was able to buy quite a satisfactory quantity of goods.

## STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

BONDS.	Nov. 28		Dec. 4	
	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	80.85%		79.25%	
Swiss Confed. 5th Mob. Loan 5%	101.35%		101.59%	
Federal Railways A-K 3 1/2%	85.07%		85.85%	
Canton Basle-Stadt 5 1/2% 1921	103.90%		105.15%	
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892...	76.85%		77.50%	
Zurich (Stadt) 4% 1909	100.05%		100.10%	

  

SHARES.	Nov. 28		Dec. 4	
	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	652	665	
Crédit Suisse	500	675	685	
Union de Banques Suisses	500	568	585	
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	1562	1610	
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	1177	1197	
C. F. Bally S.A.	1000	945	972	
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	500	567	575	
Entreprises Sulzer	1000	670	710	
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	500	332	348	
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	400	172	178	
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Kohler	100	105	104	
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	437	445	

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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

## MILITARY TAX & IMMATRICULATION FEE

Monsieur le Rédacteur du *Swiss Observer*.

Après la bonne nouvelle du verdict éblouissant rendu dimanche dernier par nos compatriotes au pays natal, nos autorités à Berne, délivrées de l'épée de Damoclès, autrement dit de la néfaste initiative, pourront peut-être maintenant examiner la question de nous faire grâce de la taxe d'immatriculation si injustifiée et impopulaire au sein des colonies suisses à l'étranger.

"A mon humble avis, tout pays doit la protection à ses nationaux établis à l'étranger sans leur imposer le paiement d'une finance (la taxe d'exem-

tion militaire n'est naturellement pas en cause ici).

Voyons, Monsieur le Rédacteur, est-il équitable qu'après avoir payé les frais, légitimes du reste, d'un passeport, tout émigrant suisse, même sans ressources, soit tenu à son arrivée à l'étranger, avant d'avoir gagné un sou, de payer, disons 10sh. pour la simple formalité de l'inscription de son nom dans les registres du représentant suisse? Notez bien qu'aux termes du règlement tous les Suisses doivent s'annoncer dans le délai d'un mois.

Au cours de sa visite à la Chaux-de-Fonds, il y a quelques mois, Monsieur le Conseiller fédéral Schulthess avait préconisé l'émigration comme remède au chômage dans ces temps difficiles pour notre pays; tandis que d'autres pays la facilitent de différentes manières, vous nous rendez compte combien chez nous la taxe d'immatriculation est illogique.

Vous me direz peut-être que les moins fortunés peuvent, sur demande, obtenir l'immatriculation gratuitement. A quoi je répondrai que les Suisses n'ont pas coutume de mendier.

Votre correspondant "Critic" dans son intéressante lettre publiée dans le dernier numéro du *Swiss Observer* nous dit que par une pétition ce brin de paille pourrait peut-être être éliminé de nos yeux (qui souffrent déjà assez des effets du brouillard). Ne serait-il pas tout indiqué que l'une de nos sociétés suisses à Londres s'occupe maintenant sérieusement de cette question. Elle aurait, j'en suis sûr, la reconnaissance d'un grand nombre de nos concitoyens.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Rédacteur, mes salutations patriotiques.

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To the Editor *The Swiss Observer*.

Sir,—I have read with much interest the letter published in *The Swiss Observer* of the 2nd inst. signed "Critic."

"Critic" contends that the Swiss Legations and Consulates have no authority either to withdraw protection from a Swiss citizen who is liable to Military Tax on account of non-payment of this tax, or to refuse, for the same reason, to issue, to prolong or to visa a passport.

I have before me the "Recueil Officiel des Lois et Ordonnances de la Confédération Suisse," volume XXXVII for the year 1921, which gives on page 841 and onwards the text of the "Ordonnance concernant la fixation et la perception de la taxe militaire de Suisses à l'étranger," which the Swiss Federal Council have enacted in execution of the powers conferred to them by Art. 13 and Art. 15 of the "Loi fédérale concernant la taxe militaire."

Art. 13.—Le montant de la taxe à faire payer aux Suisses domiciliés à l'étranger est également arrêté chaque année sur des contrôles séparés; le Canton d'origine en donne connaissance au contribuable dans la forme la plus propre à atteindre son but.

Le Conseil fédéral détermine dans quelle mesure les représentants de la Suisse à l'étranger ont à coopérer à la fixation et à la perception des taxes et à prêter à cet effet leur concours aux Cantons.

Art. 15.—Dans le but d'assurer une application uniforme de la présente loi, la Confédération a le droit de haute surveillance et celui de prononcer en dernier ressort sur toutes les opérations concernant la taxe militaire, en particulier sur celles que prescrivent les articles 11, 12 et 13.

The articles of the "Ordonnance concernant la fixation et la perception de la taxe militaire de Suisses à l'étranger," which is dated the 2nd December, 1921, and came into force on the 1st of January, 1922, dealing with the points in question read as follows:—

Art. 54.—Dans l'intervalle d'un mois au plus, le Consul adresse sous pli chargé aux assujettis dont les taxes sont arriérées une première et une seconde sommation, en les rendant attentifs aux sanctions légales pour le cas où ils ne donneraient pas suite à l'inter-vention de payer.

Art. 55.—Le consul dénonce au canton d'origine, en indiquant les dates auxquelles il a notifié les sommations, les assujettis qui, 20 jours après notification de la seconde sommation, n'ont pas encore acquitté la taxe; le canton introduit une procédure contentieuse en vue de punir les assujettis en faute conformément à la loi fédérale du 29 mars 1901.

Art. 56.—Les citoyens suisses qui n'ont pas payé leurs taxes dues perdent le droit à la protection diplomatique et consulaire, sous réserve des cas exceptionnels pressants. Sont considérés comme cas exceptionnels pressants en particulier l'atteinte à la liberté personnelle ou aux droits politiques se rattachant à l'établissement et à la résidence à l'étranger.

Art. 57.—L'acte d'origine et autres papiers de légitimation ne peuvent être transmis à des Suisses à l'étranger soumis à la taxe militaire que par l'intermédiaire du Consul compétent.

Lors de la légalisation d'actes d'origine et d'autres papiers de légitimation, la chancellerie d'Etat du Canton d'origine constate si la taxe d'exemption a été acquittée. Si cela n'est pas le cas, elle tient les papiers de légitimation à la disposition de l'ayant-droit; toutefois, elle ne peut les expédier à l'étranger ou les remettre au représentant de l'intéressé en Suisse qu'

après qu'a été effectué le paiement de la taxe militaire due.

Si la taxe pour l'année courante ou pour une année antérieure n'est pas encore acquittée, le Consul est informé, pour qu'il en avise le requérant, que le papier de légitimation demandé est à sa disposition à la chancellerie d'Etat, mais qu'il ne sera expédié à l'étranger qu'après paiement de la taxe militaire.

Art. 58.—L'établissement ou la légalisation des papiers de légitimation par les consulats est subordonnée en principe à la condition que l'assujéti paie ses taxes arriérées.

Les requérants qui doivent encore la taxe pour l'année courante ou une année antérieure sont invités à la payer immédiatement ou, en tout cas, dans un délai de 2 à 6 mois, à fixer par le Consul. Le Consul donne suite à la demande en légalisation ou en visa pour la durée de ce délai.

Art. 27.—Le dépôt, par des Suisses à l'étranger, de leur livret de service auprès d'une autorité militaire ou auprès de parents en Suisse n'est pas autorisé. Le livret de service reste en mains du propriétaire qui doit le présenter au Consul compétent lors de son annonce d'arrivée et de départ comme aussi chaque fois que la demande lui en est faite.

Le livret de service peut être gardé au Consul jusqu'au paiement de la taxe.

It is quite clear from the above that the Swiss Consular Officers have not only the right, but that it is their duty imposed upon them by the Swiss Federal Council, to satisfy themselves that the military taxes are paid before they issue, prolong or visa a passport of a Swiss citizen who is liable to military tax.

I, too, appreciate the presence in our midst of compatriots having the courage of their own convictions, as "Un Vaudois de tous les Cantons" puts it. However, before they comment on the legal side of a question, they ought to make themselves fully acquainted with the legal material on the subject. Incorrect statements, such as the one made by "Critic," which alleges that Swiss Consuls have adopted certain practices which lack any underlying power from the home authorities, do more harm than good, and it is for this reason that I ask you to be good enough to publish this letter in the next issue of your paper.

Yours faithfully,

22, Fellows Road, N.W. 3. EMILE STUTZ.

#### SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

A most enjoyable Concert was given by the Swiss Choral Society for the benefit of the Swiss Benevolent Society on Sunday afternoon, the 3rd December, at Steinway Hall. There was a large and enthusiastic audience, presided over by the Swiss Minister, who was accompanied by Madame Paravicini and their children.

On the programme was a generous number of well-chosen songs, which were admirably rendered by the choir of 36 voices under the leadership of that gifted musician, Mr. Walter Meyrowitz, the new conductor of the Society. The harmonious blending of the full, rich voices was heard with fine effect in Swiss songs and English glees, "Killarney" especially among the latter being warmly applauded; but the most enthusiastic reception of all was accorded to the Swyzerdütsch song: "Du lieber Bueb vom Emmthal," with a jodling solo by Mr. Fischer, which delighted the patriotic Swiss present and stirred home memories in all hearts.

Miss Marian Jay, a talented violinist, gave a selection of bright music from the great masters with charm and brilliant technique, displaying also fine tone and musical perception, notably in the rendering of an exquisite melody for violin and piano, called "Enchantement," with the composer, Mr. Meyrowitz, at the piano.

Several delightful songs in almost as many languages were sung by Madame Feify Davies, whose soprano voice is of exceptionally fine timbre and whose musical interpretation reveals a great artiste. Madame Feify Davies was enthusiastically applauded, and a beautiful bouquet was presented to her by little Miss Paravicini.

Space does not permit detailed notice of individual solos, which were all deserving of the greatest praise.

Mr. Paravicini, in a short and happy address, expressed the sentiments of all present by his appreciation of the fine performance of the Choral Society and the indebtedness of the Swiss Colony for the generous and artistic assistance given by the Society at many Swiss assemblies, whether meeting in Church or banqueting hall. The Swiss Minister also alluded to the coincidence of date, the 3rd December, a memorable day for Switzerland, saying, "the songs so beautifully rendered will take our thoughts back to our country which fights to-day for its freedom, prosperity and moral independence."

Mr. Manzoni, the active President of the Society, in the course of a humorous speech, made an appeal to all those in the Colony with good voices to join the choir, and it is hoped that his request will not fail to attract new members.

At the conclusion of this delightful entertainment, the Swiss Minister and Madame Paravicini invited the Swiss Choral Society and all the performers to tea, after which more songs were given.

#### PROVINCIAL ITEMS.

##### HULL.

The Swiss Consul at Hull and his secretary, M. Arregger, have given a lantern lecture in French at the Church Institute, on the 29th November, before a crowded and appreciative audience on "Switzerland and the Winter Sports."

Thanks to the very fine slides of the Swiss winter scenes, kindly supplied by the Swiss Tourist Information Office at Zurich and the London Agency of the Swiss Federal Railways, the success of the lecturers was very great.

The lecture will be repeated at Hornsea on the 12th inst.

The Swiss Consul is also going to deliver, on the 8th inst., an address to the Hull Geographical Association on "Switzerland, its Industrial and Commercial Aspects."

#### LA NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE.

(Communicated.)

##### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

on November 15th, 1922.

1. The President read a few letters from different Groups.

2. Mr. Secrétan having resigned as a member of the Committee in view of his forthcoming return to Switzerland, Dr. W. Weibel was elected to the Committee in his stead.

3. Several circulars from the Secrétariat des Suisses à l'Etranger were brought to the notice of the members: (a) One asking them to collect evidence of the abuse of the Swiss emblem abroad was transmitted to "The Swiss Observer"; (b) A suggestion to start collecting documents showing the activities of the Swiss societies abroad for the all of the Swiss Abroad at the Basle Samples' Fair of April, 1923, was discussed. It was decided that the Secretary should ask all the Swiss societies here to let him know by the end of February, 1923, what exhibits they would be prepared to send to Basle; (c) A resolution on the Capital Levy Initiative will be drafted by the Committee and be put before the audience at Dr. Wegelin's lecture on Swiss Financial Reforms.

4. The Treasurer reported three admissions and fourteen resignations. The number of members is at present 515.

5. The financial report of the Treasurer was approved. It stated that Guarantees and Members' subscriptions for 1923 received to date amounted to just over £400, which sum is not sufficient to maintain the position of the Secretary for the ensuing year. It is hoped, therefore, that a much larger number of ballot papers may be returned before the end of the year, guaranteeing the necessary funds for the retention of his services.

6. The Secretary made a few communications with regard to his activity.

7. The Secretary gave an exhaustive oral report on the Fascisti movement and its potential effect on Switzerland. He came to the conclusion that the Fascisti Government must be very carefully watched by all Swiss conscious of their nationhood, because as regards foreign politics this movement has in the past been guided by certain considerations which are in violent opposition to the fundamental principles on which our country rests, and, as regards home politics, Fascismo will naturally encourage all tendencies which are inclined to the disrespect of constitutional ways and means in the struggle for political ends.

8. An oral report was presented by the Reporter of the Art Commission. The Federal Council having taken a decision to the effect that the Federal Government will defray the expenses of the jury in Switzerland and will allow members of the Federal Art Commission to participate in that jury, together with the Committee as formed by our Commissioner, Professor Ganz, in Switzerland, the scheme seems to be secured definitely so far as official approval goes. The London Art Committee is now expecting a definite programme from the Committee in Switzerland and will, once it is in possession of this, again study the question of financing the exhibition and securing a suitable gallery.

Dr. PAUL LANG,

28, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1. Secretary.

#### PARTY TRIPS ENGLAND-SWITZERLAND.

According to an agreement passed between the English, French, Belgian and Swiss Railways, a new tariff for parties from England to Switzerland, each one composed of at least 25 persons, will come into operation probably on January 1st, 1923. These party-trips, however, must be organised by travel agencies. Only first and second-class tickets will be issued. The proposed reduction will vary from 20 to 30 per cent. on the ordinary fare. The tickets will have a validity of 33 days. The journey England-Switzerland must be effected in common; on the other hand, the return journey Switzerland-England may take place individually.

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MUSIC.—Young Swiss would like to play duos (classical) with moderately advanced violinist; 1—2 evenings weekly; Golders Green or Hampstead Tube.—Write, "Largo," c/o. *Swiss Observer*, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C. 4.

YOUNG SWISS GIRL (23), needlewoman, piano, speaking French and German, wishes situation as NURSERY GOVERNESS with good English or Swiss family; small salary.—Write, Melle, Marie Caviezel, Grand Hotel Curhaus, Davos, Switzerland.

ACTON, W. 3.—"Grafton House," The Vale; overlooking Park; easy access to City.—BOARD-RESIDENCE: breakfast, late dinner, full weekends; from £1 17s. 6d. per week.