

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

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1923)

Heft: 127

Rubrik: Home news

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The Swiss Observer

Telephone: CRY 4603.

Published every Friday at 21, GARLICK HILL, LONDON, E.C. 4.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

No. 127

LONDON, NOVEMBER 10, 1923.

PRICE 3d.

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(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postcheck-Konto: Basle V 5718.)

HOME NEWS

The latest Swiss note in the Savoy Free Zones controversy was published on Wednesday (Oct. 31) and contains two explicit questions, a reply to which the Federal Council considers as a *sine qua non* to the continuation of further negotiations. In the first instance M. Poincaré will have to declare whether he is prepared to resume *pourparlers* on the basis of the proposals of the Geneva Chamber of Commerce—which, in principle, maintain the free zones—and secondly the French Premier will have to undertake to withdraw the decree abolishing the free zones, previous to a resumption of negotiations. In the case of a negative reply the Swiss Government will insist on the matter being referred to the League of Nations for settlement.

The comments of the French press do not encourage the expectation of a favourable reply; amongst the strange arguments, elaborated by the *Temps*, is the statement that the Free Zones were created after the Battle of Waterloo, when Switzerland, being on the side of the victors, "demanded her due," and an allegation that the Swiss General Staff, during the last war, exhibited a pro-German policy.

The proceedings against M. A. Conradi, who, it will be remembered, is accused of the murder of the Russian unofficial delegate, Vorovski, at the recent Peace Conference in Lausanne, opened last Monday, before the Lausanne tribunal, in the large hall of the Montbenon Casino. Conradi is defended by National Councillor Sidney Schöpfer (Lausanne), whilst Vorovski's widow is represented by Dr. Franz Welti (Basle); an array of other well-known legal experts is also engaged in looking after the interests of third parties. The case, which is likely to last from 10 to 14 days, is being watched by over 80 journalists, mostly on behalf of foreign papers: a similar number of witnesses is being interrogated, and amongst the latter are such well-known names as Prof. Klutschnikoff (Berlin), Sidney Grefson (major in the American army), Henri Barbusse (author of the war novel "Le Feu"), Ladyginski (chief of the Russian Red Cross in Geneva), Princess Tatiana Kurakin, etc. At the opening, the defending counsel opposed the admissibility of a civil claim, as Madame and Mademoiselle Vorovski had not established their legal status by producing formal evidence of marriage and parentage respectively; the court, however, ruled that there were sufficient and convincing reasons to presume their identity. Another unsuccessful objection was directed against one of the prosecuting counsel, who, before accepting his brief, had demanded an undertaking that, whilst the trial lasted, no reprisals against Swiss residents in Russia should take place. The evidence of the witnesses so far examined deals chiefly with generalities, such as the meaning and objects of Communism and Bolshevism (Charles Rappaport, editor of *L'Humanité*), the sacking of the Swiss Legation in Petrograd (M. de Murat, a Montreux lawyer), the destruction and wanton cruelties committed by the present Russian régime (Charles Smith, an American engineer from Siberia), etc.

Higher credits for military aviation figure in the Budget for 1924; the *personnel* is to be increased from 161 to 191, and the installations at the flying stations at Dübendorf and Lausanne are to be improved.

Lucerne being invaded by increasing numbers of dancing masters, the latter are to be put under Government control. The hours of their lessons are to be regulated, and a register will be established, giving particulars of origin, domicile, age, and former profession.

Neuchâtel electors have rejected the proposed new law, imposing duties on direct successions.

Two wolfhounds, belonging to shopkeepers in Aesch (Basel), attacked a nine-year-old boy, Othmarli Machler, who was collecting firewood just outside the village; the boy was frightfully torn and mangled before being rescued, in a dying condition, by a passer-by.

A regular skirmish preceded the capture of two lads of foreign extraction, who are responsible for house-breaking and a number of thefts near Steckborn (Thurgau). Their hoard having been discovered in a hut, the neighbouring forest was searched and surrounded by police, assisted by armed civilians. Seeing their retreat cut off, the two culprits commenced firing, but without hitting any of their pursuers, who finally succeeded in making them prisoners.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Industrial Switzerland.—At the end of 1922 there were 8,055 works in Switzerland subject to the Federal factory acts, employing 304,339 operatives. As compared with 1921, this is a decrease by 282 works, a fact which is explained by the general economic crisis. The number of hands, too, which was 360,506 in 1916 and in 1918, the time of the boom, has dropped considerably. But this is the case in every country.

The distribution of operatives amongst the various industries in 1922 is best seen by the following table:—

Trade.	Staff Employees.	
Cotton	32,265	119,639
Silk	27,500	
Wool	6,999	
Linen	1,607	
Embroidery	14,282	
Other Textile Industries	5,595	
Clothing and Outfitting	31,891	
Machinery and Apparatus	49,918	100,728
Watchmaking and Jewellery	27,596	
Metal Industry	23,314	
Food and Drinks	21,401	83,972
Wood Industry	15,244	
Chemical Industry	11,432	
Graphic Arts	10,964	
Earth and Stone	10,566	
Paper, Leather, Rubber	10,039	
Electricity, Gas and Water	4,326	
Total	304,339	

It will be seen by the above returns that the first place is taken (120,000 operatives) by the clothing and textile industries, which give employment to nearly 40% of the working population.

The second rank is occupied by the metal, machinery and watchmaking industries, which give employment to exactly one-third of the working population. All the other industries occupy about one-fourth.

In conclusion, a few details concerning the Swiss cotton trade. At the end of 1921 the number of spindles in the spinning mills amounted to 1,524,487 and in twisting mills to 134,566. The number of looms was 25,931, and has changed very little as compared with the previous year.

The principal branches of the textile industry are:—

The silk industry, which, judging by its export figures, takes the first rank in the Swiss export trade (fabrics: 183,000,000 frs., ribbons: 70,000,000 frs.)

The embroidery industry, which has its seats in the cantons of St. Gall and Appenzell, and the products of which were exported in 1922 for 143,000,000 frs.

The cotton industry, which has taken up its quarters in the cantons of Zurich, Glarus and St. Gall, and exported fabrics for 127 and yarns for 46 million francs.

The hosiery and knitted goods industry, the exports of which amounted in 1922 to 41 million francs.

L'Histoire de Guillaume Tell racontée par un écolier fribourgeois.—La Société Dramatique de Romont devant donner assez prochainement la représentation d'un drame dans lequel domine la grande figure du héros de Bürglen, nous pensons intéresser les lecteurs du "Courrier," en leur mettant sous les yeux la composition textuelle d'un élève de nos écoles fribourgeoises. Cette composition publiée par le "Faisceau mutualiste" offre un singulier mélange de souvenirs se rapportant les uns à Tell, les autres à Guillaume II:

Guillaume Tell était empreur de Lallémagne. Alors il voulait faire la guerre à Lautreiche. On envoya contre lui le général Kessler qui fit planter sur la place un grand poteau. Au bout du poteau, il avait attaché une ficelle et au bout de la ficelle il avait mis un chapeau avec de belles plumes d'autreiche.

Guillaume Tell passa devant le poteau. Alors les soldats lui disent: Salue donc le chapeau.

Guillaume répond: Je m'en f... de votre chapeau. Alors les soldats l'ont pris par le collet et l'ont mené chez le général Kessler.

Le général lui dit: Pourquoi tu n'a pas salué? Guillaume répond: Sa, c'est mon affaire. Le général redit: Ah! c'est comme ça; eh ben, tu vas tiré sur une pomme et si tu la rates je te fais fusiller.

Alors on alla prendre le petit garçon de Guillaume Tell qui s'appellait le kronprince, on l'apuya contre un arbre, on lui mit une belle pomme à beignet sur la tête et on lui dit: Ne bouge plus. Alors le père leva son fusil pour tirer mais il avait la tremblotte et voyait tout trouble.

Kessler lui dit: Dépêche-toi ou l'on te tue et ton gosse avec.

Guillaume Tell pensa en lui-même: Tannis il faut que je tire, mais gare à lui si je rate.

Alors il lâche son coup, la pomme tombe par terre. Quelle chance! Le petit kronprince faisait des cabrioles de joie, et les gens qui était la sur le place criaient: hip, hip, houra!

Mais Kessler était noir de colère, il dit à Guillaume Tell: Vaurien, tu as triché, tu as caché des cartouches dans ta blouse.

Les soldats viennent l'empoigné, ils prennent une chaînette et lui attachent les mains sur le dos. Ils le mènent ensuite sur un bateau pour aller le flanquer en prison au fond d'un château.

Quand ils arrivèrent au milieu du lac, le lac s'est dérangé et l'eau glaçait par dessus le bateau et tout le monde risquait de se noyé.

Le général Kessler était tout blanc de peur. Il dit à Guillaume Tell: Toi, tu es un solide gaillard, tu sais mieux ramer que les autres.

Guillaume Tell répond: Moi j'ai pas peur, le lac ça me connaît. Il prend les rames et se cram-



FACTS:

1. One out of ten persons is accidentally injured every year.
2. On the average 50% of all accidents happen outside of one's profession. For men whose duties confine them largely to the office, this ratio rises to over 80%.
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