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CORRESPONDENCE.

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

MILITARY TAX & MATRICULATION FEE.

To the Editor *The Swiss Observer*.

Sir,—I take the question of the withdrawal of the *ordonnance* as having been disposed of, but if we do not go any further we shall have failed to come to the main point.

To my mind the *ordonnance* stands more in the light of a wrong against the constitution than against the Swiss abroad. I therefore ask the authors of the *ordonnance* to say whether they knew, and had any consideration for, the preamble to the Federal Constitution, as well as Art. 1, 2, 85 and 106 thereof. They appear not to have kept them in mind.

The preamble defines the scope of the constitution as—

“maintenir et accroître l'unité, la force et l'honneur de la nation suisse.”

Art. 1 reads:—

“Les peuples des vingt-deux cantons souverains de la Suisse, unis par la présente alliance, savoir . . . forment dans leur ensemble la Confédération suisse.”

Art. 2 says:—

“La Confédération a pour but d'assurer l'indépendance de la patrie contre l'étranger, de maintenir la tranquillité et l'ordre à l'intérieur, de protéger la liberté et les droits des confédérés et d'accroître leur prospérité commune.”

The constitution speaks of “peoples” of the 22 cantons, and as the Ticino still considers me one of their people, even if I am outside the territorial frontiers of Switzerland, I am within the meaning of the constitution. Indeed, the thought behind the constitution seems to be that Switzerland extends virtually to all corners of the world where there is a Swiss living. I do not, however, become a “Federal subject,” a sort of citizen of an imaginary “Suisse une et indivisible.” No, I remain one of the people of the Ticino and retain Cantonal identity even abroad, however little I may put forward this point. We are, therefore, technically wrong when we speak of *Quatrième Suisse*; we are, in effect, “ex-territorial Switzerland,” a regular miniature confederation, superposed to the one at home.

It is evident that the *ordonnance* is in contradiction with the preamble and Art. 2 of the constitution. Furthermore, it heavily infringes Art. 106, which reads:—

“Il y a UN Tribunal fédéral pour l'administration de la justice en matière fédérale,” and the judges, according to Art. 85, are nominated by the National Assembly.

To my mind the *ordonnance* elevates every legation and consulate to the position of a federal court of justice; it elects scores of federal judges without ascertaining their names or their fitness, endows them with wide discretionary powers and allows them to pass severe judgments; furthermore, it infringes the principle of the separation of judicial and administrative functions by allowing the collector of the tax to be one who judges the merits of the case and inflicts the penalties.

Indeed, it amounts to this: that the federal executive departments carried out wide amendments to the constitution, without caring about the *peuple souverain*, the prerogative of the cantons, or the functions of the National Assembly. As a constitutional issue the *ordonnance* concerns, therefore, both the military tax payers and those who are not liable, the Swiss at home as much as those abroad.

Yours faithfully,

O. BRAGA.

78, High Street, Teddington.

SWISS BANK FOOTBALL CLUB.

SWISS BANK 2nd XI v. BANQUE BELGE.

(London Banks' Junior Cup.)

Replayed on December 23rd, 1922. As is usual when these two teams meet, a fine, exciting game resulted, ending in a draw. Banque Belge started very well and hit the home cross-bar in the first ten minutes. This was followed by a goal, and they kept their lead until half-time. The second half was full of thrills. Owing to the fine defence of the Banque Belge, the Swiss team did not equalise until 10 minutes from the end, and then the exchanges became very exciting. The Swiss Bank were decidedly unlucky in not scoring again. Both defences played splendid football in this exciting match. It is hoped that the game will be decided before the season closes.

Result: Banque Belge 1, Swiss Bank 1.

Team: Zuercher; Herzog, Habluetzel; Rufer, Way, Bornand; Quaife, Tobler, Goubach, Tobin, Goubach.

A few volumes of last year's *Swiss Observer*, containing Nos. 30 to 70, bound to match our previous volume in dark cloth with gilt-lettered back, are now ready and may be had at the price of 15s. each (15s. 10½d. by post).



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Cet avis tient lieu de convocation. Tous ceux désirant y participer sont invités à s'annoncer en temps utile au Trésorier, M. G. Dimier, 46, Cannon Street, E.C. 4. (Téléphone: Central 1321).

Ordre du Jour.

Procès-verbal. Démonstrations.
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NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE.

NOTICE.

Will members please note that, as from the end of this year, the Treasury of the group has been transferred to the Head Office, 28, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1, and that all communications (contributions, applications, correspondence, etc.), should be addressed as above.

It is with deep regret that we learn of the death, at the age of 71, of our compatriot, Mr. Edward Degen, F.Z.S. of Basel, who has resided in London for some 40 years. Mr. Degen was an eminent naturalist, formerly associated with the Natural History Museum, and at one time he held an appointment at the Melbourne Museum. Mr. Degen was an intrepid explorer, and since his return from Australia to London in 1901 he was a member of many notable expeditions abroad, acting in his capacity as naturalist and also undertaking scientific research work. He twice visited Abyssinia, and also accompanied expeditions to Uganda, the Belgian Congo and Northern Alaska. His book on “Ecdysis” (moulting of birds) was officially published by the Geographical Society as a standard study on this subject. Mr. Degen received recognition of his services by being made an hon. life member of the Zoological Society.

EGLISE SUISSE, 79, Endell St., W.C. 2.

Dimanche, 7 Janv., 11h.—M. B. Moreillon.
6.30.—Pfr. U. Wildbolz.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday, Jan. 6th, 1923, at 6.30 p.m.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Cinderella Dance at the Midland Hotel. Fancy Dress Optional.

Tuesday, Jan. 9, at 6.30 p.m.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Monthly Meeting, preceded by a Supper (see adv.).

Wednesday, Jan. 10th, 1923, at 7 p.m.—SWISS BANK CLUB: Whist Drive at Slater's Restaurant, 34-35, High Holborn, W.C. 1.

Wednesday, Jan. 10th, 1923, at 9.15 p.m.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Lecture on “Banking and Currency” by H. A. Silverman, Esq., B.A., Econ. (Hons.), Dip. Com., F.R.E.S. at 1, Gerrard Place, W. 1.

Friday, Jan. 12th, 1923, at 8.30 p.m.—SWISS INSTITUTE: Lecture in French by Mr. Em. Cammuarts on “Belgium since 1870.”

Friday, Jan. 19th, 1923.—NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE: No Lecture.

Saturday, Jan. 20th, 1923, at 6.30 p.m.—CITY SWISS CLUB: Cinderella Dance at Gatti's Restaurant.

Friday, Jan. 26th, 1923, at 8 p.m.—SWISS INSTITUTE: Reception for Members and Friends of the “Social and Political Education League.”

Wednesday, Jan. 31st, at 7.30 p.m.—SWISS BANK CLUB: Dance at the Suffolk Galleries, Suffolk Street, S.W. 1.

Saturday, Feb. 3rd, 1923, at 6.30 p.m.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Cinderella Dance at the Midland Hotel.

The Publisher will be pleased to forward free specimen copies of “The Swiss Observer” to likely subscribers whose addresses may be supplied by readers.

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