

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: - (1924)

Heft: 159

Rubrik: Notes and Gleanings

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 16.05.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

débris et les armes des Bourguignons qui furent pourchassés et refoulés dans le lac. Les découvrir sous les flots et la vase qui les recouvre n'est pas chose aisée. Aussi M. le Dr. Flückiger, à Morat, spécialement chargé de ces fouilles s'est-il adressé à M. l'ingénieur Studer, à Neuchâtel, lequel, avec son collègue M. Martenet, ingénieur de la ville de Neuchâtel, a imaginé un appareil qui décèle la présence d'objets métalliques cachés à une certaine profondeur.

Le samedi 17 mai ont eu lieu les essais de cette ingénieuse machine. M. le conseiller d'Etat Buchs assistait à l'expérience, qui fut tentée en face de la presqu'île de Greng, où, selon les chroniqueurs, un grand nombre de chevaliers du Téméraire sautèrent dans l'eau, telles des grenouilles affolées. Après quelques tentatives infructueuses, l'aiguille marqua une déviation sensible due sans doute à la rencontre d'une pièce de métal. La place précise en fut notée par une pierre munie d'un flotteur. Reste maintenant à explorer le fond du lac en cet endroit afin d'entrer en possession de l'objet signalé. Les recherches continueront. (La Revue.)

Ein sonderbarer Vogelzug. — Dem "Bund" wird aus Spiez geschrieben: Vor einiger Zeit beobachteten Anwohner des Thunersees einen seltsamen Vogelzug, über den wir bis heute durch Vogelkennner nicht aufgeklärt worden sind. Mittags gegen 1 Uhr zog mit rasender Geschwindigkeit, die wohl an die 100 Kilometer in der Stunde erreichen mochte, ein in Dreieckform organisierter Vogelzug von ungefähr 100 Exemplaren dicht über die Wasseroberfläche, Richtung Faulensee-Leissigenbucht. Von dem erhöhten Spiez aus erschien der Zug wie eine wunderbare Perlenkette, die ein Unsichtbarer ruckweise und in Schlangenlinien hinwärt und über die Wasser zog. Weissrötliche Perlen! Um 3 Uhr sahen wir sie in Spiez wieder, und bald erhoben sich die unermüdeten, über erstaunliche Kräfte verfügbaren Flieger unter grossem Lärm, der an Gänsegeschmetter erinnerte, in die Höhe, und in ausgesprochener Dreieckform, auf jeder Schenkelseite flankiert von je einem Aussenseiter, flogen sie Richtung Thun davon. Bald kehrten sie wieder, und bei dem mehrmaligen Kreisen über dem Thunerseebecken gewann der staunende Zuschauer den Eindruck, als ob die Vögel im Bergkessel sich verfangen hätten und keinen Ausweg mehr wüssten. Und doch kamen sie auf einmal nicht wieder herauf: sie hatten sich landabwärts gewandt und offenbar die Orientierung wieder gefunden. Leider hatte sich nie Gelegenheit geboten, die Vögel in der Nähe zu betrachten; mit dem Feldstecher bewaffnet, suchten wir Anhaltspunkte zu ihrer Bestimmung zu erhalten. Weiss-rotes Oberkleid, schwarze Schwingen auf der Unterseite, lange Beine, langer Hals liessen die Vermutung aufkommen, dass Flamingos uns ihren Besuch abgestattet hätten. (Thurgauer Zeitung.)

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KIBURG."

The Troubles of Switzerland.

Contemporary Review (May, 1924):—

A very interesting article by E. Fueter appears in the above, and I would advise all my readers who are interested in the economic side of Swiss politics to get the *Review* and read that article. It will be an eye-opener for many, although for others it may provide controversial matter.

Summer.

Even my optimism would not let me express any too great hope for a prolongation of the summery weather we have been enjoying these last few days. But it is nice while it lasts, and, incidentally, it does turn one's mind towards the coming summer holidays. If any of my readers wish to be posted concerning possible holiday tours in Switzerland, let him turn up last year's files of *The Swiss Observer*, or else, let him look in almost any of our English contemporaries, where he will find articles, illustrated and documented. Each year, it seems to me, judging by the enormous wealth of information on Switzerland given to English newspaper readers, Switzerland is becoming more and more the happy holiday ground for John Bull. And, I feel pretty sure, no guests are more welcome in Switzerland than English ones.

Swiss Federal Railways.

My readers know that the Swiss Federal Railways are showing good returns. Goods traffic seems to be growing as well, as will be seen from the following, culled from *The Times* Trade and Engineering Supplement (17th May):—

Goods traffic on the Swiss Federal Railways shows great activity, and at certain points has exceeded its pre-war level. At Basle the daily arrivals, to a large extent German coal in transit to Italy, exceed 100,000 tons, whereas the highest pre-war figure was 60,000 tons. The question of improving the station is being discussed.

At their last session the Federal Chambers at Berne adopted the decree raising the Swiss duties on tobacco, which should bring a revenue of 25,000,000 francs to the State. Having regard to pipe-smokers, the Federal Council has, however, decided to reduce the duty on Kentucky tobacco. The Government has also raised the price of benzine in spite of the protests of the growing number of motor-car owners.

Rather sad, of course, is the news, contained in the above, re Tobacco and Benzine. I don't know

from personal experience whether Kentucky tobacco is particularly nice or otherwise. I suppose it is a brand smoked largely by an 'influential' section of our compatriots at home!

As regards the very often vexatious bye-laws against motorists in Switzerland, I am confident that things will improve when our Legislators, Federal and Cantonal, have taken to motoring themselves. The A.C.S. ought to see to it that all Legislators have a car. I am sure it would pay in the end.

Greater Switzerland.

According to the *Daily Express* (22nd May)—The authorities of Liechtenstein, an independent Austrian State, having decided on the use of Swiss postage stamps, have just had all remaining stocks of Liechtenstein stamps destroyed at the Swiss paper mill at Eichberg.

The stamps, about nine millions, represented £640,000.

Liechtenstein, as my readers know, has been linked up with Switzerland by a Customs Union, which, by the way, has been officially recognised by Great Britain.

Almost Human Typewriter.

Daily News (10th June):—

A description which I sent to the "Daily News" last October of a phonetic typewriter—that is to say, a machine to produce on paper written copies direct from dictation—excited a great deal of interest, and was quoted all over the world. Several British engineering firms asked to be put in touch with the inventor, but he was already in negotiation with American firms, and just before Christmas he went to New York.

The machine, of which the parts had been made by different firms in America, was assembled, and he was able to demonstrate its practical utility, but it proved too complicated. He therefore set to work to simplify it, and succeeded in doing so, and also in interesting some private capitalists in his invention. Now he is back in Switzerland.

Expenses in America were prohibitive, but a Berlin firm has been found, willing to construct the model for 25,000 gold marks, and after a short rest the inventor is going to Germany to see it through. The construction of the model will probably take about six months. The alterations have necessitated fresh patent applications, and it is not expected that the patents will be obtained before another three months in Switzerland and six months in the United States.

For the moment, judging by the cost of production of this ingenious machine, 'Kyburg' will have to be satisfied with his present typing outfit. I daresay that, by and by, even the newspapers will be made in such a way, that one can either read them or, if the light is not good enough, may, perhaps, by turning over one corner of the page, get them to speak up. And I do not even think that any of us would be greatly astonished, so used have we become to new inventions, which, in former years, would have meant inevitable death for the inventor, as being obviously in league with the devil.

Strike against Ugliness.

Daily Express (17th May):—

A strike against ugliness has occurred at Belfort, near the Swiss frontier, where schoolchildren of both sexes have objected to their newly-appointed school-mistress because she wears American spectacles.

They demand a prettier teacher, resembling the one who resigned recently on her marriage, and refuse to go to school unless one is appointed. Parents and school-mistress at Belfort are in a dilemma, as the type of teacher specified is scarce.

La vérité souvent sort des bouches des enfants! There is hardly anything more ugly than the owl-like look these American, horn-rimmed spectacles give the wearer. I know, of course, that the latter thinks he looks intellectual. But what a poor intellect which has to rely on such exterior help! The fashion, I was once informed, originated in British Government offices, to wit, in the Civil Service, and, before the Great War, I believe only heads of departments were allowed to wear these horn-rimmed spectacles. The War, the great leveller, has also done its levelling "down" in this matter. Three throaty and hearty cheers for the "gosses de Belfort"!

Spine Hearing.

Sunday Chronicle (8th June):—

The extraordinary case of a deaf mute hearing music through his spine is puzzling Swiss scientists.

Eugene Butermeister, of Berne, a young man who has been born deaf, recently entered the Kursaal at Berne during a concert, and was surprised to find that he could "hear" and enjoy the music, not through the ears, but through the spine.

"My spine seems to become a kind of lightning conductor, and I distinctly feel waves of sound passing upwards to the brain. The sensation is very pleasant," Butermeister explains.

He has been tested with music by doctors, and he can distinguish the name of the opera and the instruments played. He cannot "hear," however, if people stand between him and the orchestra.

Butermeister cannot hear the human voice nor a loud noise in his vicinity, and "speaks" by means of the finger alphabet, says a Geneva correspondent.

The Legend of the Pilatus.

In an article, entitled "The Mountain Railways of Switzerland, the *Sphere* prints the following, which may interest some of my readers and give them a somewhat creepy feeling when next ascending the famous mountain:—

Pilatus itself is one of the most interesting mountains in these parts, and its name has been the subject of much dispute as to whether it derived that name from 'pileatus,' which means "capped," or from the celebrated Pontius Pilate. The latter is more picturesque. It insists that the Roman governor, fleeing

from Jerusalem after the Crucifixion, was filled with a great remorse, and sought to do penance among the fastnesses of this melancholy peak. Here for many a lonely year he dwelt until at length, when he had reached to despair's deepest depths, he took his own life by drowning in a lake near the summit of the mountain. But his spirit continued to haunt the place, and certain travellers known to be god-fearing men, have seen the ghost of Pontius Pilate rise up from the waters and slowly, solemnly, repeat the ceremony of the washing of hands. Then the tempest howled, the lake heaved, dark clouds and heavy mists swirled in passionate fury round the mountain's head, and a fierce storm inevitably followed.

Swiss Industrial Migration.

The Times (17th May):—

A very difficult problem is touched upon by the following from The Times Geneva correspondent:—

The emigration of certain old-established and almost world-renowned Swiss firms is beginning to cause serious anxiety. The Press describes it as a loss of intellect, capital and craftsmen. Large manufacturing concerns are installing branches abroad which are quickly becoming more important than the original house. For example, a certain enterprise at Arbon no longer keeps more than a fifth of its old staff employed, while its French establishment are trebling their payroll. At Rorschach a well-known factory is now no more than a branch of the works, which have been moved to Delle. At Basle activity has shifted across to the French suburb of St. Louis, and at Geneva to the neighbouring district of Annemasse. Brown-Boveri, of Baden, and Bailey, of Schönenwerd, have foreign off-shoots which seem to-day to be growing more powerful than the Swiss factories. This movement is attributed to four main causes: the cost of living, high wages, increased transport charges, and labour legislation.

It is perhaps interesting and *à propos* to quote here the following from E. Fueter's article "The Troubles of Switzerland," to which I have drawn attention at the beginning of these Notes. He says:—

And yet, the most effective means of putting new life into export, that is, into Swiss industry in general, would be a decrease in the cost of living, which is being made increasingly difficult by the laws for the protection of agricultural products. As long as the most necessary articles of food are as dear as they are at present, it is impossible to reduce wages in industry and the railways (the Swiss railways are probably the dearest in the world at the moment) to a level which would bring about normal competitive conditions for us abroad. But every attempt to take energetic steps in this direction is wrecked by the peasants' party, and therefore hopeless.

From the point of view of stability much can be said for this peasants' Government. Switzerland has as little to fear from Bolshevist ideas as France. There are no large private estates, there is no section of the country population where Socialistic tendencies could take root. But the question arises whether this advantage is not too dearly bought if the peasants' rule renders the existence of the other classes, who after all have to live, so difficult that it becomes impossible for them to maintain the export industry necessary for their support.

EUROPEAN & GENERAL EXPRESS CO., Ltd.

BRADFORD, LONDON, W.1. LIVERPOOL, 51, Kings Arcade. 15, Poland Street. 14, South Castle St.

Oldest Swiss Forwarding Agency in England

Household Removals at inclusive Prices in our own Lift Vans.

Luggage and Private Effects

collected, packed and shipped to and from all countries

BEST GOODS SERVICE BETWEEN SWITZERLAND & ENGLAND

Average Transit for Petite Vitesse (Frachtgut):

LONDON-BASLE 7—8 days
BASLE-LONDON 4—5 ..

Managing Directors: H. Sigmund & Erh. Schneider-Hall.

60

Pension Suisse 20 Palmeira Avenue, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.

Highly recommended. Every comfort. Continental cuisine. Billiards. Sea front.

Phone: Southend-on-Sea 1122 Proprietress: Mrs. Albrecht-Mengediehl

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

Not exceeding 3 lines.—Per insertion, 2/6; three insertions, 5/— Postage extra on replies addressed *via* Swiss Observer.

BOARD-RESIDENCE.—Single and Double Rooms, overlooking large gardens; use of drawing-room; very convenience; good cooking; very central; Swiss proprietor; terms from 2½ gns.—41, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.

TO LET, Bed-Sitting-room and small Bedroom, with use of Sitting-room; Continental cooking.—Apply, Mrs. Myers, "Hartland," Hadley Road, New Barnet.