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HOME NEWS

In the National Council it has been pointed out by a member that the extended facilities for entering Switzerland, granted by the Federal Council, have resulted in a number of Swiss workmen being replaced by foreigners.

The torrential rain of last week has caused considerable damage in the canton of Ticino. The little village of Someo, on the right bank of the Maggia, has been partly destroyed by a landslide from an adjoining mountain. The movement began on Wednesday afternoon (Sept. 24) and allowed most of the inhabitants to take refuge, but in the houses that were engulfed, eight persons are reported to have lost their lives, in addition to a similar number seriously injured. The dead belong to the families of Tommasi, Vedova, Rigghetti, Tognazzi, Lanotti and Gomatti. On account of the interruption of the telegraph and telephone wires the catastrophe became known only the following day, the fire brigades of Bellinzona and Locarno being then called out by the tolling of the church bells.

The Federal Council is contributing Frs. 10,000 to the relief fund opened in connection with the Someo disaster.

A remarkable decrease in emigration has taken place since the beginning of this year. During the first six months only 1,658 persons left Switzerland permanently, the total number for the year 1923 being 8,006. This decrease has been most pronounced in the agricultural class.

The theatre at Lucerne, which is the property of the town, was entirely destroyed by a fire which broke out last Monday night just before 9 o'clock. The damage is said to be in the neighbourhood of half-a-million francs, and is fully covered by insurance.

Prof. Dr. J. J. Schär died in Freidorf (Basle) on Thursday, Sept. 25th, at the age of 78 after a long illness. The son of an Emmenthaler dairy farmer, "Papa" Schär will always be remembered by the many disciples who had the privilege of listening to his fascinating lectures at the "Basler Handelsschule" and the Federal Polytechnic in Zurich. For some years, before retiring from public life, he was rector of the Handelshochschule in Berlin. Prof. Schär was the author of many works on commercial subjects and a promoter of the Swiss Co-operative Society (Schweizer. Consumverein).

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Le désastre de Someo. — Au moment où l'orage battait son plein au-dessus du village de Someo, on aperçut soudain une masse de pierres et de terre qui se détachait à grand bruit de la montagne. Terrorisés, les habitants prirent la fuite pendant que la masse dévalait vers la partie inférieure du village. Deux maisons d'habitation et une dizaine de granges ont été détruites.

Les habitants n'avaient pas encore gagné le centre du village quand se produisit un second éboulement. C'est celui-ci qui fit le plus grand nombre de victimes.

Maitrisant leur effroi, les habitants cherchèrent à sécuriser leurs concitoyens ensevelis. Un messenger fut envoyé par le syndic à Locarno, mais il ne put arriver que dans la matinée de jeudi, en raison des routes devenues impraticables.

Les autorités, les pompiers de Locarno, la Croix-Rouge de Bellinzona arrivèrent bientôt sur les lieux, suivis par les membres du gouvernement tessinois. Des secours furent organisés par les villages voisins.

Fort heureusement, le nombre des victimes n'est pas aussi élevé qu'on l'avait annoncé tout d'abord. Il y a dix blessés et huit morts, dont voici les noms: Tommaso Vicenzi et son fils Adolfo; Caterina Della Vedova; Carolina Rigghetti; E. Tognazzi; Teresina Lanotti; Toni et Maddalena Gomatti.

L'état des voies de communication est désastreux. La ligne du chemin de fer est coupée sur

de nombreux points dans la vallée. Les communications par fil sont aussi coupées. La gare se trouve parmi les bâtiments détruits. L'asile des vieillards est entouré de décombres.

Aux environs de Verdasio, dans les Centovalli, un éboulement s'est produit qui a obstrué la Centovallina près de Intragna.

Un autre éboulement est signalé sur la rive droite de la Maggia, près d'Aurigeno. Une femme a disparu.

On apprend des détails toujours plus graves sur les dégâts causés par l'orage de mercredi soir dans les vallées supérieures du Tessin et dans la région de Locarno.

Un éboulement a obstrué la plus grande partie de la route du Lukmanier, aux environs d'Acquacalda. Le pont entre Aquila et Olivone a été emporté. La ligne de chemin de fer de Biasca à Olivone est obstruée sur une distance d'environ 30 mètres. Des dégâts particulièrement importants sont signalés dans l'Onsernone et dans la Verzasca. On ne signale heureusement pas de victime dans ces régions. A Campo-Vallemaggia, quatre maisons se sont écroulées sans faire de victime.

Pendant l'orage, les bateaux qui se trouvaient sur le lac Majeur ont dû se réfugier en toute hâte dans les ports de Cannobio et Ranzo. D'autre part, les objets et surtout les arbres entraînés par la Maggia et le Tessin ont rendu très dangereuse la navigation. Celle-ci a dû être interrompue.

(Journal de Genève.)

Un livre d'or militaire. — Les militaires du bataillon de fusiliers 28, dont l'effectif est fourni par la ville de Berne, entendent, et ils ont raison, que le souvenir de leurs exploits ne se perde pas. Une commission de rédaction comprenant trois officiers a été chargée de publier un livre d'or relatant l'histoire du bataillon de 1874 à 1924. Tous les soldats anciens et actuels sont invités à consigner par écrit les impressions et anecdotes susceptibles de figurer aux annales du corps. Les photographies sont également les bienvenues.

(La Revue.)

Une nouvelle cabane du Club alpin. — La semaine dernière, la section valaisanne du Club alpin Mont-Rosa était en fête; elle inaugurait la cabane du Saflisch, construite par les soins du groupe de Brigue, au-dessus de l'Alpe du Rosswald, à 2100 mètres d'altitude. Plus de 400 personnes avaient répondu à l'appel du comité. Une nombreuse phalange des groupes de Monthey, Martigny, Sion et Sierre arriva à Brigue par le premier train du matin et eut l'agréable surprise d'être saluée à la gare par la vaillante société de musique la "Salinta," sous la dévouée et démocratique direction de M. l'avocat A. Perrig.

C'est l'après midi de dimanche que l'inauguration eut lieu par un temps splendide et idéal.

(Indépendant.)

Ces jours passés, deux Valaisannes d'environ 80 ans se rendirent à Einsiedeln en faisant une bonne partie de leur pèlerinage à pied. Elles partirent de Viège par la Furka, descendirent la vallée d'Urseren jusqu'à Wassen, où elles prirent le train jusqu'à Brunnen et de là elles continuèrent leur route à pied jusqu'à Einsiedeln. A cet âge-là, la promenade n'est vraiment pas ordinaire.

(Feuille d'avis.)

Zürich. — Ein Rekordresultat schlossen die Stadtschützen Neumünster, die Sieger beim Sektionswettkampf am eidg. Schützenfest in Aarau, am Bezirksfeldsektionswettsschiessen vor ca. einer Woche in Zürich. Von 68 Schiessenden erzielten 32 das Kranzresultat. Die in Berechnung fallenden Resultate ergaben einen Durchschnitt von 67,586 Punkten, gegenüber dem bisher höchsten Durchschnittsresultat von 65,65 Punkten.

(Berner Jura.)

Ein ergötzliches Grosstadt-Idyll erfreute dieser Tage an der Greifengasse in Basel Jung und Alt. Als dort ein biederer Bauer sein Kuhgespann über das Pflaster führte, fand eines der beiden Kühlein, es sei nun Zeit zum Wiederkäuen, und es legte sich quer auf die Transchiene, um der wichtigen Tätigkeit abzuliegen. Nichts von dem Tier darin stören; selbst die lange Kette der Tramwagen, die sich allmählich vor ihm staute, liess das vielbeschäftigte Kuhgemüt unberührt. Erst als ein Anwohner zwei tüchtige Kübel kalten Wassers der Kuh über Kopf und Rücken goss, begann sie das Ungewöhnliche der Situation zu empfinden. Zum Aufstehen konnte sich das Tier aber erst entschliessen, als ein weiterer "Fachmann" kunstgerecht Wasser ins Ohr fliessen liess. Unwillig brummend ob dieser menschlichen Tücke erhob es sich nun zum grossen Leidwesen der das Schauspiel mit Sachverständnis bewundernden Schuljugend.

(Schweizer Wochen-Zeitung.)

L'INFLUENCE D'UN GENEVOIS.

Dans sa brochure intitulée "L'influence d'un Genevois au Congrès de Paris," M. Henri Bartholdi a eu l'heureuse idée de grouper quelques lettres de Pictet de Rochemont, tendant à prouver que le rôle joué par les Genevois au Congrès de Paris n'est pas du tout celui qui leur a attribué si injustement M. Ferrero.

L'ancien maire d'Annecy, en effet, sous prétexte de défendre son point de vue dans la question des Zones, s'est complu à ternir la mémoire de Pictet de Rochemont, le représentant de la Suisse.

M. Bartholdi a su rétablir la vérité et nous lui en sommes reconnaissants. Les lettres de l'illustre négociateur genevois montrent clairement que, loin de défendre avec violence ou exagération les intérêts de la Suisse et de Genève, il agit constamment en faveur de la paix, soutenant même la cause de la France, la "pauvre France" comme il l'appelle, et blâmant "l'avidité et la passion des cabinets de Londres et de Berlin."

Mais il devient nécessaire de citer M. Bartholdi pour mieux faire comprendre le rôle joué par Pictet de Rochemont entre les ambassadeurs des puissances, d'un côté, et Richelieu, le ministre des affaires étrangères de France, de l'autre.

Quand on se rappelle que Pictet de Rochemont était un anglophile convaincu, qu'il avait servi la cause des Alliés, qu'il était citoyen d'une république qui venait de souffrir 17 ans la domination française, on ne peut qu'admirer la loyauté, la franchise de langage, le haut esprit de justice de ce Genevois, qui n'hésite pas à prendre la défense du vaincu, ancien oppresseur de sa cité.

Ainsi notre négociateur se trouve au coeur même des négociations de 1815. Il est appelé par la confiance des deux parties et l'évident désintéressement qu'il incarne. Et de quoi s'agit-il?

Il s'agit, pour la France, d'exister ou non! L'attitude de Pictet de Rochemont est vite prise. Il défendra la cause de la France. La position de Richelieu excite le plus vif et le plus juste intérêt, dit-il, aussi il s'emploiera à adoucir et rapprocher puisque la confiance qu'on lui accorde des deux côtés lui en fournit les moyens.

Le jeu est terrible de part et d'autre, dit-il encore. La moindre imprudence de la France pouvait compromettre son existence.

Et l'influence de Pictet de Rochemont, la confiance qu'on lui accorde des deux côtés lui faciliteront sa tâche, qui est d'empêcher que ce désastre arrive.

En prenant à notre compte le mot de M. Ferrero d'Annecy, rapporté en commençant cette étude: "qu'il est indispensable d'analyser le rôle joué par les Genevois dans ces traités de 1815, qui furent humiliants et désastreux pour la France..." on peut dire sans crainte, que la seule fois où Pictet de Rochemont a fut mêlé d'une façon directe, ce fut dans la période peut-être la plus grave de conséquences pour nos voisins et qu'il défendit leur cause.

Et c'est ainsi qu'au risque de compromettre les intérêts dont il a la charge, il défend la France.

Personne ne peut raisonnablement me croire des préjugés contre le cabinet de Londres, dit-il dans sa lettre du 30 à Turetini. J'ai toujours eu et j'ai encore, au contraire, une prédilection particulière pour l'Angleterre, qui date du temps où j'y étais amoureux et où j'y ai eu d'excellents amis. Je fais profession d'une grande admiration pour cette belle machine politique. Je me suis longtemps associé d'imagination aux succès de cette énergique nation, dans sa lutte contre le tyran du continent, et il me semblait que j'avais une part directe à ses triomphes. Il ne s'ensuit pas nécessairement que je doive applaudir à tout ce que font ses ministres et que je ne puisse déplorer que, dans cette occasion d'éclat, leur politique ne soit plus large.

Je citerai encore pour finir ces quelques paroles du Pictet de Rochemont par lesquelles M. Bartholdi termine sa brochure:

La vie d'un monarque, disait Pictet de Rochemont — et c'est par cela que nous terminerons —, l'esprit de ses conseils, l'influence d'un ministre sont des influences passagères sur lesquelles la saine politique ne doit pas asseoir ses calculs, lorsqu'il s'agit des intérêts permanents des nations.

C'est en consultant l'histoire que l'on se pénètre de l'importance qu'il y a à opposer à l'iniquité des peuples et à l'ambition des chefs, des barrières qu'elles ne puissent aisément franchir ou renverser.

Voilà l'homme, voilà le citoyen genevois dans son essence. A. W.

* L'Influence d'un Genevois au Congrès de Paris en 1815. Imprimerie du "Journal de Genève." 1924.

FOUR SWISS ADMIRALS.

By "LEO."

Please do not think this is a joke. It is true that, in view of the natural conditions of our little country, it may seem somewhat strange to speak of Swiss admirals, perhaps even ridiculous; but with a little research four Swiss can be found who, in the course of the past centuries, became noted for their brilliant careers as admirals abroad. They are: D'Erlach, Le Port, Saint Saphorin, and Hoegger.

John Louis d'Erlach was born at Berne in 1648. He belonged to the well-known family of the victor of Laupen, who presented the Republic of

Berne with many a military officer, several of whom afterwards attained the rank of general in France and Austria. In 1664, at the age of sixteen, D'Erlach left for Denmark, where he joined the Navy. In 1665 he distinguished himself in the battle of Bornholm between the Dutch and Danish fleets against the Swedes. To reward him for his bravery, Frederic III. promoted him to the rank of captain, and although he had only just turned 18, he was placed in command of a first-class battleship. His heroism and naval science soon obtained him the rank of squadron commander. Having now become a terror to the enemy fleets, he made a number of daring landings on the Swedish coast, which greatly helped to increase his fame, and in 1678, on the death of the famous Juel, Christian V. made him Vice-Admiral in recognition of his valour. The conquest of the island of Ruegen and his expedition to the coasts of Spain were his last acts of heroism, and he died in 1680 at 32 years of age, as a result of the wounds incurred in his last campaign. In Denmark to-day he is still remembered and even placed on the same level as other famous sailors, as Ruyte and Duquesne, etc.

At about the same time a young man of Geneva was covering himself with glory in the service of the Czar.

Francis Le Port was born at Geneva in 1656; his brother, Ami Le Port, was Lord Mayor of that town. At the age of fourteen, Francis was already serving with the Swiss Guards in France, where they all distinguished themselves by their courage. He then went over to the Dutch and was seriously wounded in the siege of Grave, after which he left for Russia in 1670. After travelling three months, he landed at Archangel and thence went to Moscow, and as captain joined the body-guard of Czar Theodor. Through the influence and protection of Galitzine, favourite of the Regent Sofia, he was soon promoted to colonel. In 1689 Le Port made the acquaintance of Peter the Great, who at that time was only 17 years of age. He rapidly became the latter's counsellor and friend, and Peter gave him the task of reorganising his army. Soon after, however, he was placed in charge of the Russian Navy, and ordering the immediate construction of new docks and ports, he united a fleet in the Black Sea, of which he was nominated Admiral. The siege of Azov put the prowess of his new fleet to the test, and the fortress surrendered on the 20th July, 1699. The Czar attributed the greater part of his victory to the Swiss admiral's success. According to the chronicles, Le Port's entry into Moscow was a real triumph: he was seated in one of the Czar's sledges, drawn by six horses, Peter following behind on foot, clothed in simple uniform of a ship's captain. The Czar made him General of his body-guard, Grand-Admiral of the Fleet, Chief Councillor, Vice-King of the Grand Duchy of Novogrod, and finally head of the embassy which went from Russia to Holland, England and Austria. Le Port died in Moscow on the 12th March, 1699, in consequence of old wounds. At his burial the Czar was heard to say: "Whom can I trust now? He was the only one who remained faithful to me at all times."

Francesco Luigi di Pesne di Saint Saphorin came from Canton Vaud. He was born in the castle of Saint-Saphorin at Morges in 1688. He first served with a Swiss regiment of Saccenay in Piedmont, then in Holland and afterwards in Austria, where he attained the rank of General and Vice-Admiral of the Danube Fleet, and fought against the Turks. He afterwards became Austrian Ambassador in Switzerland, Representative of the Bernese Republic at the Congresses of Aja and Utrecht, and signed the peace of Aarau in 1712, which marked the end of the Villmergen war. In 1716, George III., appreciating his high capacities, nominated him Lieutenant-General of the English Fleet and British Ambassador at Vienna. In the quarrel over Neuchâtel he kept Louis XIV. of France in check, giving preference to the King of Prussia's claim. In 1722 he retired to his castle at Saint-Saphorin, where he died 15 years later at the age of 69.

Sebastian Hoegger, born at St. Gall in 1680, felt the calling of the sea already in his early youth. After many cruises abroad, he presented himself at Bender to Charles XII. of Sweden, who, somewhat struck by Hoegger's vast knowledge, placed him in his war-fleet. In 1717 Hoegger was already ship's captain, in 1722 squadron commander, and in 1723 Baron of Tumburg. Ferdinand I. sent him on a diplomatic mission to Paris in 1725, where he died as Swedish plenipotentiary and Vice-Admiral in 1737.

So you see, after all, the Swiss Admiral is not a mere legend, but, as facts show, he occupies a distinguished position in the history of the past centuries. And now—who knows?—one day, perhaps sooner than we imagine, the Swiss Admiral may live once more to give proof of his knowledge. When the time shall come, that, by means of river navigation, Basle will have direct access to the North Sea, the Lago Maggiore, by means of the rivers Ticino and Po to the Adriatic, and the rivers Lemano and Rodano to the Mediterranean, then we shall be able to see ships sailing on the high seas, flying a white cross on a red background,

and then perhaps, we shall really have an admiral all to ourselves. Naturally the typical profile of the old Swiss admiral with the three-corned hat, high top-boots and pleated coat, standing on the bridge of some old battleship carefully scanning the horizon, now belongs to history alone; nevertheless, our imagination permits us to bring this celebrity back to life.

We are pleased to be able to conclude this article by expressing the hope of seeing the young Rocchino Simen of Bellinzona, eldest son of Rinaldo, called to a brilliant career on the water. Following in his ancestor's footsteps and those of the late Toricelli of Lugano, who so honourably distinguished himself in the Italian mercantile marine, Rocchino Simen has already obtained a high rank in the Italian war-fleet, and his talent and courage lead us to believe that he will rise still higher. We wish him the very best of success for his own sake and for the honour of his native land.

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

Accounting in the report for the year ended March, 1924, for the loss of 25½ million francs on the year's working, the Directors of Brown, Boveri & Co., of Baden, point out that the sudden slump in 1920 originally caused the Company considerable losses and necessitated the writing off of large amounts on raw materials and finished or semi-finished goods. At the same time, orders were slow to come in, and the fall in prices further aggravated the situation. The manufacturing profit shown on the Baden and Munchenstein works for 1923-24 amounted to Frs. 3,563,000 and compared as follows with the four preceding years:—

1922-23	...	5,978,000
1921-22	...	8,697,000
1920-21	...	9,058,000
1919-20	...	12,649,000

It is obvious that the small return for the last year is really insufficient to cover the general working expenses of the two factories.

Further losses have been incurred on the Company's participation in the "Sécheron" and "Scintilla" works, but the directors might have hoped to cover all the deficit represented by their Swiss interests out of reserves, without touching capital, had it not been for political events in the Ruhr, which upset their German subsidiary, the Brown, Boveri & Co., S.A., in Mannheim. Until the end of 1923 the situation of this concern was relatively favourable, but the sudden cutting off of these works from all their sources of raw material supply operated in the most disastrous manner. Approximately it may be said that at the end of 1922 the value of the shares of the German subsidiary was 200 pre-war marks, while at the beginning of 1924 the valuation was only 20 gold marks.

After dealing at length with other foreign participations, the directors pass on to a note of hope, expressing their belief that the improvement which has now set in will continue and render it again possible to cover general expenses and assure some remuneration for capital.

The report is a lengthy document, and it has only been possible here to touch on a few items of interest with which it deals. An appendix provides a most interesting sketch of the life and work of Mr. C. E. L. Brown, who died in Lugano last May and holds an honoured place among Swiss engineers and inventors.

The new Federal Loan has been an unqualified success, applications for Conversion having amounted to Frs. 65,000,000 and cash subscriptions to Frs. 45,000,000. The amount offered being only Frs. 80,000,000, allotments to new applicants will be on a basis of 34½%. It is interesting to learn that the small investor has been most prominent in this connection, so that it may be assumed the bulk of subscriptions have been in no way speculative, but represent the genuine investment of new money.

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

BONDS.	Sept. 23		Sept. 30	

Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	...	72.37%	...	72.75%
Swiss Confederation 5% 1923	...	97.15%	...	96.75%
Federal Railways A-K 3½%	...	76.95%	...	76.55%
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	...	100.12%	...	100.25%
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	...	67.00%	...	67.00%

SHARES.	Nom.		Sept. 23		Sept. 30	
	Frs.	Frs.	Frs.	Frs.	Frs.	Frs.
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	...	645	...	644
Crédit Suisse	...	500	...	680	...	680
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	...	538	...	537
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	...	3175	...	3125
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	...	1995	...	1942
C. F. Bally S.A.	...	1000	...	1100	...	1096
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	...	500	...	638	...	645
Entreprises Sulzer	...	1000	...	616	...	612
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	...	500	...	278	...	287
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mlk. Co.	...	200	...	199	...	199
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Kohler	...	100	...	145	...	142
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	...	500	...	540	...	520

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