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HOME NEWS

The Federal Council has created a consulate for the Near East and has nominated Mr. Jona Kübler, of Kloten (born in Jerusalem) honorary consul, with official residence in Jaffa (Palestine).

An important decision has just been given by the Federal tribunal in Lausanne. According to the cantonal constitution of Neuchâtel electors in arrears with the payment of their respective rates or taxes during the previous five years are barred from exercising the franchise. The Lausanne tribunal has now declared that this disposition is contrary to the personal guarantees laid down in the Federal constitution.

In the elections for the five members of the government of the canton of Ticino during the last week-end the Agrarian Party suffered a heavy defeat partly attributed to the death of their former leader, Domini; their seat (Rossi) went to the Conservative Party, which now holds two mandates (Cattori and Tarchini) the same as the Liberals (Galli and Mazza), the fifth seat being retained by the Socialists (Canevascini). Judging from the number of votes recorded in favour of the different parties an early return of the Liberals to power seems to be indicated; since 1923 the majority belonged to a strange Coalition between Conservatives, Socialists and agrarians.

The Basle Grosse Rat granted an annual subsidy of Frs. 400,000 during the next five years to the municipal theatre; a proposal by the Communist Party to eliminate from the University curriculum the Faculty of Theology was defeated by a large majority.

The population of the town of Berne at the end of December last is given as 108,904.

On the occasion of the official dissolution of the Germano-Swiss relief commission, created in 1920, the German ambassador in Berne gave a reception to the Federal Council and representatives of societies that were engaged in this relief action; as a souvenir the Federal President was presented with a stained glass panel, suitably inscribed.

After a protracted trial the four Basle policemen who, in their misguided zeal, shot and fatally wounded a Securitas watchman whom they had mistaken for a burglar, were acquitted of the charge of having acted contrary to the instructions applicable in such cases.

Part of the Quai de Bon Port, near the golf links at Territet, has subsided and broken away into the lake of Geneva.

A Zürich mechanic who, one night last October, with a car he was driving, ran into and mortally injured a pedestrian, has been sentenced to eight months' imprisonment. It was stated that at the time he was in an intoxicated condition, drove at an excessive speed, and disappeared after the accident. He was found and arrested a few days later.

M. Menoud-Musy, a notary who died recently at Bulle (Fribourg) and who was a nephew of Federal Councillor Musy, bequeathed the whole of his fortune, estimated to be worth about a million francs, to a public fund for the purpose of founding a home for tuberculous children.

Col. Heinrich Brack, director of the cantonal arsenal and a former chief of police, died in Aarau at the age of 68, after an operation; he was president of the organising committee of the "Tir Fédéral" of 1924.

The chief of the publicity department of the Swiss Federal Railways, Mr. K. L. Geiger, is resigning his post as from the end of March, after 35 years' service.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Un succès de notre horlogerie.—Les fabriques de montres Zénith viennent de remporter un éclatant succès à l'observatoire de Kew-Teddington.

Voici la traduction de la lettre adressée à la maison suisse par la direction de l'observatoire:—

"Nous joignons à la présente un bulletin de marche en classe "A" pour votre chronomètre de bord No. 1113575 qui a récemment subi les épreuves dans ce laboratoire.

Il vous intéressera de savoir que le total des points 97,2 obtenu par ce mouvement, est le plus élevé qui ait été attribué pour une montre observée en classe Kew "A" jusqu'au moment où nous écrivons.

La valeur, 0,07 seconde, obtenue pour l'écart moyen de la marche diurne constitue aussi un record en étant la plus basse cote enregistrée pour une montre dans nos épreuves de la classe "A."

Les résultats sont des plus flatteurs et contribueront au bon renom de notre industrie horlogère à l'étranger.

La Gruyère, Bulle.

Un jubilé.—Le poète et romancier suisse, Ernest Zahn, ancien tenancier du buffet de la gare de Coeschenen, fête aujourd'hui lundi son soixantième anniversaire. Né le 24 janvier 1867 à Zurich, il est aujourd'hui fixé à Meggen près de Lucerne. Longue est la liste de ses œuvres: poèmes, récits, nouvelles, romans, dont plusieurs ont connu le grand succès et dont quelques-uns ont été traduits et publiés en France. Il est docteur en philosophie *honoris causa*. Il est le fondateur et le président de la société du Théâtre de Zurich.

Il a débuté en 1893 avec *Combats*. Les Alpes renaissent enfin dans la littérature de la Suisse allemande avec un éclat inattendu. Zahn avait quitté les bords riant du lac de Zurich pour les solitudes de Gothard; en face de cette puissante nature, il éprouva un tel saisissement, le milieu, si nouveau par ses moeurs et le caractère de ses habitants, l'intéressa à un tel point, qu'endormi restaurateur, il se réveilla écrivain. Il exprime dans une langue bien à lui, la sévère poésie de là-haut. Son imagination s'alimentait à l'inépuisable source de la vie. Dès lors, les œuvres, se succédèrent, remplies de types caractéristiques et bien vivants. M. Zahn est un réaliste, mais pas de ceux qui se plaisent à établir ou à fouiller plaies et ulcères; il ne sermonne pas comme Gotthelf, il ne philosophe pas, il reste toujours un conteur fidèle. Ses récits sont de l'éthique en action. Il a écrit deux drames, mais quoique ses romans soient débordants de matière tragique, il n'est pas homme de théâtre. En remettant en vogue le roman et la nouvelle alpestres, Ernest Zahn a créé une école à laquelle se rattachent Meinrad Lienert, J.-C. Heer, Jacob Bosshard, Franz Odermatt. Il a tracé dans la vie littéraire de la Suisse un large et fécond sillon.

La Tribune, Lausanne.

Pourquoi le nombre des fonctionnaires a augmenté ?—Répondant à cette question, ou du moins pour ce qui concerne les fonctionnaires de l'administration des postes, la Direction de l'administration fédérale des postes fait remarquer que pendant que la population de la Suisse a augmenté de 40%, le trafic postal, lui, a augmenté dans une proportion beaucoup plus forte au cours des cinquante dernières années. En ce qui concerne par exemple le trafic interne des lettres, il a augmenté au cours de la période précitée de 540%. Le nombre des lettres expédiées à l'étranger est de 450% plus élevé et celui des lettres qu'on reçoit de l'étranger de 600% plus élevé également. L'expédition des journaux par l'entremise de la poste a augmenté de 600% environ, et celle des colis postaux de 500%. Il y a encore lieu de signaler le développement considérable qu'a pris le téléphone au cours de ces dernières années, extension qui nécessite naturellement un personnel nombreux. Enfin, les exigences du public sont aujourd'hui beaucoup plus grandes qu'autrefois, et ces exigences ont pour conséquence, indubitablement, une augmentation de l'armée des fonctionnaires.

Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne.

Un impôt sur les étrangers en Suisse.—Les nouvelles mesures prises par la France et qui ont eu pour conséquence de fixer à 375 fr. par tête, la taxe annuelle sur les étrangers, ont fait surgir à nouveau en Suisse une question qui a déjà été discutée en son temps: celle de l'introduction dans notre pays d'une taxe sur les étrangers. Il y a deux ans, en effet, un mouvement s'était dessiné dans le canton de Zürich pour l'introduction d'une taxe sur les étrangers dont le montant correspondrait à peu près à notre taxe militaire. Toutefois, la difficulté pour l'introduction d'une semblable mesure réside dans le fait que pour éviter des différences entre les diverses parties du pays, c'est à la Confédération qu'il appartiendrait d'en prendre l'initiative. Ce qui ne pourrait être obtenu qu'au moyen d'une révision de la Constitution fédérale.

Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne.

ANNIVERSARIES OF SWISS EVENTS.

February 6th, 1519.—Fribourg agrees to exchange the rights of citizenship with Geneva, originally aimed at by the Genevese patriot, Philibert Berthelier; he was later on, in Aug., arrested at the instigation of Duke Charles III., tried and condemned to death on a charge of high treason and executed the same day in the island castle, where a monument to his memory now stands.

February 7th, 1747.—Avalanche disaster in the Val Bedretto.

February 8th, 1526.—Renewal of the alliance between Berne, Geneva and Fribourg. "Bezangon Hugues and his comrades, passing through Savoyard Vaud, returned in triumph with this treaty which bound the three towns to each other for a term of twenty-five years. In the general assembly of the citizens which the council summoned on Feb. 25th, in order to sanction the alliance, the bishop at first entered a protest, and threatened to appeal to the Pope and the emperor." (Oechsli).

February 10th, 1551.—The whole of the lakes in Switzerland frozen up.

February 11th, 1499.—Beginning of the "Swabian War" as a consequence of the Grisons being cut off from Austrian sphere of influence and joining Switzerland. The battle ranged along the whole line of the Rhine, from the Grisons-Tyrolese frontier to Basle. The united forces of Austria and South Germany were badly beaten at Triesen in the Vorarlberg, at Hard near the Lake of Constance, at the Bruderholz near Basle and at Triboldingen (Thurgau); the citadel at Vaduz was destroyed and the whole of the Vorarlberg conquered as far as Feldkirch.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Spahlinger Treatment.

The instructive controversy initiated in the *Daily Express* is nearing completion. Very extensive and unbiassed have been the enquiries made by that great journal and the only conclusion left on the mind of the reader is that Mr. Spahlinger cannot substantiate any of his bold statements and that his alleged cure for tuberculosis is an utter failure. I reprint some extracts from the long report which appeared in the issue of Jan. 27th; first of all about the personnel at his laboratory at Carouge:—

The workers at the Carouge Laboratory are: His mother, who puts in long hours at all manner of tasks.

His wife, who frequently examines through the microscope for traces of tubercle in the "slides" made from the sputum of patients.

A typist secretary, who also works at the culture of bacteria.

Two male assistants, one a Russian, and the other—I was informed—a Czech-Slovakian, who cultivate bacilli and draw the blood serum from horses and other animals.

One Englishman, a mechanic, who does odd jobs. This man is claimed to be one of the "cures."

A school friend of M. Spahlinger, who acts as a sort of house manager in the absence of Mr. R. Goulburn Lovell when Mr. Lovell comes back to England to instil Spahlinger propaganda, interview prospective patients and others interested in the Spahlinger Institute, and to escort patients from this country to Switzerland.

An interesting personality of the "entourage" is the Russian. He was a soldier in the Russian Army during the war. He came into Switzerland as a prisoner on exchange, and was found to be suffering from tuberculosis. He received the Spahlinger treatment, but is not free of the disease.

Part of this man's work is to inoculate patients with the Spahlinger serum—from the administration of which painful and difficult reactions may occur. He has—it was admitted to me—no sort of medical knowledge whatever, but is "a good and efficient worker."

This Russian at the present time is on the Riviera looking after the inoculation of patients who have gone to the south of France to escape winter in Switzerland.

None of these assistants are qualified, in the recognised sense, and it seems strange that some

of them, as stated in another part of the article, are allowed to administer injections to patients. Here are opinions by two scientists of eminent rank: Prof. Calmette, head of the Pasteur Institute, in Paris, says:—

Spahlinger, so far as I know, has taken no recognised medical authority into his confidence, but has always worked alone and refused to acquaint the medical world with his secret. We of the Pasteur Institute would gladly have investigated his treatment or collaborated with him in the tremendous fight against one of the world's most terrible scourges, but we have never been given an opportunity.

Four years ago Spahlinger came to me in person and proposed that we should carry out tests of his methods on animals. I jumped at the opportunity and readily consented. In the interests of my profession and as head of the Pasteur Institute, I had to impose certain legitimate conditions which, in my opinion, were essential if a real test were to be made of the treatment. I insisted that the animals experimented upon should remain under my direct supervision, so that I could watch the effect produced by the treatment.

"Spahlinger evidently objected to this condition for some reason I have never been able to fathom, for he never came to see me again and I have never seen him since. I can, of course, draw my own conclusions from this attitude, but you can understand I do not wish to make them public. This is all I care to say on this tremendous problem and controversy which is being waged around it at the moment.

A well-known Swiss authority, Prof. Dr. H. Sahli, of Berne, states the following:—

As far as I know, Swiss patients are not treated by the Spahlinger method because nobody thinks it of any value. On the same grounds it is not employed by Swiss doctors unless it be that they allow their patients to dictate their treatment, which is not customary and is a liberty which only foreigners assume occasionally.

I personally became acquainted with Spahlinger many years ago when he visited me in order to start an anti-typhoid serum, which he declared to be infallible. He then impressed me as a person completely ignorant of medicine. One would not expect anything else, as he is not a doctor. So far as I know nothing more has been heard of the Spahlinger typhoid serum just as, soon, nothing more will be heard of Spahlinger's tuberculois serum.

In several patients who have come to me after having been treated by Spahlinger I have never seen any benefit, but, on the contrary, considerable damage. This is not to be wondered at since every only half-informed medical man knows that animal sera, if used continuously over long periods, like Spahlinger's, can produce considerable toxic effects. Serum treatment of that kind is, therefore, regarded by doctors as permissible only for single, or at most few, injections in cases of acute illness in order to avoid severe damage.

Such toxic effects of a severe degree I have recently seen in a foreigner who was treated by Spahlinger. These effects were irreparable.

Spahlinger is himself, of course, no judge at all of the results of his treatment since he cannot, as a layman, examine his patients properly either before or after treatment. The judgment of the patients themselves, where they are favourable to him, must be considered as all the less valuable when one realises the well-known inability of the tuberculous patients to judge their own condition objectively, and especially as one does not know at all how many of them treated by Spahlinger were ever tuberculous.

If these opinions carry any weight—as no doubt they do—it seems odd that Mr. Spahlinger can still continue unhampered his propaganda and thus secure more patients from England, all the more when practically all the sufferers who have already been cajoled to Geneva are unanimous in voicing their disappointment. The medical profession in Switzerland is certainly more tolerant than its confrères in this country.

A Political Trial.

After scarcely two days' deliberations the trial of the Hungarian journalist de Justh, who last June smacked the Hungarian Prime Minister's face in the lobby of the League of Nations building, terminated without much ado, though it had all the aspects of a *cause célèbre*. The accused was defended by a French barrister and well-known Socialist deputy, and the constitution of the court was unique in Swiss jurisdiction. The cause of the action has some similarity with the Vorovski case when Conradi, for an infinitely more serious offence, was acquitted by a Lausanne jury. The following report is from the *Daily Telegraph* (Jan. 26th):—

All things considered, the sentence passed by the Swiss Federal Criminal Court of twenty-four days' imprisonment—already served—a fine of 500 francs, and ten years' exclusion from

Swiss territory on Ivan de Justh, the young Hungarian who assaulted Count Bethlen, the Hungarian Premier, in June last, when he was attending a meeting of the League of Nations, may be considered fairly equitable. As the president of the court, M. Rossel, said, though the act in itself was not a serious crime, it had a grave moral aspect, for it affected the good faith of Switzerland in protecting delegates to the League of Nations.

That the Federal Government took the matter seriously is proved by the fact that the trial was conducted before the Federal Court, which had not met for thirty years at Geneva. As M. Graz, the Procureur-Général of the canton of Geneva, the prosecuting counsel, said, the Swiss Government, in signing the Covenant of the League of Nations, had rendered itself responsible for the protection of the delegates who came to Geneva. There was, indeed, no doubt about the offence that Justh had committed. It had, according to the Procureur-Général, a double character; it was also an outrage on the leader of the Hungarian Government, who, in his view, enjoyed diplomatic privileges in Switzerland. The Swiss had not only to protect Count Bethlen as a delegate to the League, but also to prevent any act which might trouble their relations with other countries.

This point, however, gave rise to a long discussion between the three judges on interpretations of the Swiss Penal Code, which one described as archaic. It was finally put to the jury in the form that the Swiss Government was under an obligation to protect Count Bethlen's person. It was for this reason that the prosecuting counsel asked the jury for a unanimous verdict of perpetual banishment from Switzerland, with twenty-four days' imprisonment and a fine of 1,000 francs.

The French advocate, Maître Moutet, who defended Justh, ingeniously tried to drag a red herring across the track by pleading that his client committed a political offence and was, in the circumstances, justified. He described at some length the tyranny under which he alleged that Hungarians were suffering and dragged in the affair of false banknotes, declaring that M. Briand had dealt a far shrewder blow at Count Bethlen than ever Ivan Justh had delivered by proposing to the League that there should be an international undertaking to suppress the fabrication of false banknotes. Finally, Maître Moutet invoked the achievements of Phillibert Berthelin, the famous Swiss patriot, and of Swiss heroes against Hapsburg tyranny, as precedents which justified Justh's act.

The Procureur-Général naturally pointed out in his reply that Maître Moutet was trying to convert the trial into a political debate, and that it had nothing to do with the political situation in Hungary, the sole issue being a charge brought against a Hungarian national for a personal assault on the head of the Government of his country. Moreover, it was vital to Switzerland that representatives of foreign Powers who visited her territory should be safeguarded against such attacks, and that Geneva should not be regarded as a tourney ground where quarrels could be settled with impunity.

Maître Moutet, however, still persisted that the blow had been struck not so much at Count Bethlen as against a Government based on "violence and injustice." "If this were not a political trial," he continued, "my client would have appeared before a police tribunal. But he is here to enable Count Bethlen to exploit the verdict of a Swiss jury as an expression of approval for his Government."

The jury, however, followed the advice of the president of the court and refused to acquit Justh. The trial appears to have removed any doubt as to the obligation of the Swiss Government to protect representatives of foreign Powers against assault on Swiss soil, and it is regarded as strange that the case in which Conradi was charged with murdering the Russian delegate and acquitted should not have been tried before the Federal Court. The Swiss Government may be said to have learnt a lesson from this case, because the Russian Government, in reply to the invitation of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to attend the International Economic Conference, still refuses to send a delegate because the meeting is to be held at Geneva.

The Savoy Free Zones.

The following extract from an article in the *Manchester Guardian* (Jan. 24th) puts the whole position in a nutshell:—

In November, 1923, France, under the Poincaré regime, abolished on her side the free zones, notwithstanding sharp Swiss protests. Switzerland absolutely denied the French right of abolition and demanded arbitration.

Herriot, in 1924, accepted arbitration and signed a Franco-Swiss agreement to submit the free zones dispute to the Hague Court of International Justice. The Swiss Parliament ratified this agreement in March, 1925, and no referendum having been desired the Swiss ratification was definitely accomplished in June, 1925. Dur-

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ing the same month the French Government requested the French Parliament to authorise French ratification. The French Chamber approved ratification in July, 1926, more than one year later. Since then the matter has progressed no further. Even the Commission for Foreign Affairs in the French Senate has not yet dealt with it.

In the meantime France has built big Custom houses directly on the Swiss frontier. This postponing of the ratification and the building of Customs houses on a spot where they could not be erected if the free zones still existed, has undermined confidence in French good faith.

Trade Union Funds.

The financial, though not the numerical, strength of the trade union movement in Switzerland is illustrated in the following article from the Trade Supplement of the *Times* (Jan. 22nd):—

Whereas between 1919 and 1925 the number of workers increased from 1,000,000 to about 1,500,000 in Switzerland, the membership of the Swiss trade unions fell from 223,588 to 149,997. But during the same period the funds of the unions rose from nearly 3,000,000 francs (£120,000) to 12,766,495 francs (£510,659). The most important—i.e., that of the railwaymen—has 3,104,687 francs (£124,187) at its disposal; the metal and watch workers 3,014,376 francs (£120,575); the printers 2,706,518 francs (£108,260); and the wood and building trade workers 1,395,367 francs (£55,814).

In 1925 the receipts of the trade unions totalled 8,873,297 francs (£354,931) and the expenditure 6,747,594 francs (£263,903), thus showing a surplus of 1,625,703 francs (£65,020) for the year. The chief items of expenditure were one and one-third million francs (£53,000) for illness and accident allowances; and one and one-third million francs (£53,000) for unemployment pay; 600,000 francs (£24,000) for printing and publications issued by the trade unions; 500,000 francs (£20,000) for help to strikers; and nearly 1,500,000 francs (£60,000) for the administrative staff and the leaders of the trade unions.

The Most Popular Ambassador.

Our Minister has—like all those who have the good fortune to make his acquaintance—taken the *Lady's Companion* by storm for this is what that journal says in its issue of Jan. 22nd:—

The most popular Ambassador in London is probably the Swiss one, M. Paravicini, and it isn't altogether because he's got a ready smile and enormous tact. He's six feet in height. Next in popularity, I should think, is the Spanish Minister. He is also exceptionally good-looking. Don't ask me who's the most unpopular amongst the Legation folk, for I should'n't dare tell you!

Mittelholzer—a German!

One of the news agencies (British United Press) has issued the following curious item to the English Press:—

Anxiety is being expressed in Berlin as to the fate of the German aviator, Herr Walter Mittelholzer, who, it is feared, is lost or has met with disaster in Central Africa.

Herr Mittelholzer left Zürich in December, and was last sighted at Junja, Central Africa, whence he intended to fly to Ruwenzori.

The expedition, which was being made in a Donnier-Wahl airplane, had the former German colonies for its destination.

Lieut. Mittelholzer is, of course, Swiss and he is not lost; the expedition is an entirely Swiss venture. The chief cause of the interruption of his flight to the Cape is petrol trouble, the tank steamer on the Tanganyika Lake having, owing to a mishap, been unable to furnish the pre-arranged supply. In the meantime one of the observers, M. René Gouzy, has contracted malaria and will not be able to accompany the aviator on the remainder of his journey.

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The Cantonal Bank of Zürich has been the first of these institutions to declare its profits for the year 1926 and announces that out of a net profit of Frs. 2,900,000, an allocation of Frs. 1,450,000 will be made to reserves, Frs. 1,160,000 will go to the Cantonal Treasury, and Frs. 290,000 to the General Cantonal Fund.

The Swiss Customs authorities announce that for the month of December, 1926, imports reached a value of Frs. 219,000,000 and exports amounted to Frs. 172,000,000, showing a surplus of imports—that is, an unfavourable trade balance of Frs. 46,000,000 for the month.

For the complete year 1926 imports amounted to a total of Frs. 2,633 million and exports were Frs. 2,038 million, while the final figures for 1926 showed imports to a value of Frs. 2,414 million and exports of Frs. 1,836 million.

It was recently reported that the Chemin de Fer du Midi was placing in Switzerland a 6% loan of Frs. 100 million. It is now understood that the whole of this issue has been taken up by

an important banking house in Zürich, and that there will be no public offering of the bonds in the Swiss markets. The amount of the loan is fixed in French and not Swiss francs.

The Cantonal Authorities of Berne are not often in the limelight as borrowers in the Swiss markets, and their appearance now with a loan of 15 million francs is the first since May of 1925. The new loan is to bear interest at the rate of 4½% and will be issued at 99%. The term of the loan is fixed at 15 years, with option on the part of the Canton to redeem after 12 years.

It will be remembered that the last occasion on which the Canton of Berne offered a loan was in 1925, when the issue was made to provide funds for the earlier stages of the work on the Oberhasli Power Station. The amount of the loan was then only 12 million francs, which was issued in the form of 5% bonds at 98% redeemable in 12 years, and the applications were so heavy that very large oversubscription resulted and a total amount of Frs. 125 million was actually applied for.

For 1927 the Berne budget foresees a deficit of 3½ million francs, but in this connection it must not be overlooked that the Canton owns very valuable agricultural and forest property, the value of which may be put at approximately Frs. 50 million, an asset of the greatest importance.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.	Jan. 25		Feb. 1
	Fr.	Fr.	
Confederation 3% 1903	81.75	82.00	
5% 1917, VIII Mob. L.	101.80	101.62	
Federal Railways 3½ A—K	84.40	84.22	
" " 1924 IV Elect. L.	101.50	101.62	
SHARES			
	Nom	Jan. 25	Feb. 1
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	800	805
Crédit Suisse	500	846	849
Union de Banques Suisses	500	700	700
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2585	2592
Fabrique Chimique et-dev. Sandoz	1000	4055	4072
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000	2750	2760
S. A. Brown Boveri	350	540	557
C. F. Bally	1000	1275	1285
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	651	697
Entreprises Suisses S. A.	1000	1029	1055
Comp. de Navig. sur le Lac Léman	500	570	570
Linoleum A. G. Giubiasco	100	100	98
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	697	692

EIDGENÖSSISCHE GLOSSEN.

Benzinroll als Allheilmittel.

Unter den Schulden der Bundesbahnen figurirt ein klarer Posten, der nichts anderem als der militärischen und wirtschaftlichen Verteidigung der Schweiz während des Krieges zuschreiben ist. (Die Bundesbahnen haben sich zwar etwas spät aufgemacht, um auf eine Uebernahme dieses Postens durch den Bund zu bringen.) Es scheint nun eigentlich selbstverständlich, dass dieser Betrag von 200 Millionen vom Bund auf Konto "Mobilisationskosten usw." übernommen wird. Doch allen scheint das nicht selbstverständlich zu sein. Nationalrat Dr. Klöti ist der Meinung (siehe Schweizerisches Zentralblatt für Staats- und Gemeindeverwaltung, 1. Heft), dass der Benzinroll "teilweise zum Lastenausgleich zwischen Bahn und Automobil verwendet werde," d. h. dass "ein gewisser Mehrertrag über die Summe von 16 Mill. Franken (Gesamtertrag 1916) hinaus den S. B. B. als teilweises Entgelt für ihre ungenügend honorierten Leistungen der Kriegszeit zugewiesen werde."

Also: Weil der Bund während des Krieges die Bundesbahnen ungeschäftlich behandelt hat, soll heute der Benzinverbraucher diese Schulden bezahlen. Der ganze Benzinroll rührt in seiner unglaublichen Höhe (zirka zwei rünftel des Kaufpreises!) aus einer Zeit und einer Anschauungswelt her, da man den Benzinverbrauch als einen Luxusverbrauch betrachtete. (Könnte man heute schon Benzin aus Kohlen in der Schweiz herstellen, so fiel dieser Zoll weg, denn die Kohlen werden glücklicherweise nicht derart behandelt.) Statt nun diesen Benzinroll, der gleichzeitig eine Steuer ist, den Strassen so viel wie möglich zugute kommen zu lassen, sollen damit die Schulden der S. B. B. verzinzt werden. Es ist gut gemeint—aber gegenüber demjenigen, der mit Benzin arbeitet, weil sich kein Mensch und kein Bund darum kümmert, einen schweizerischen Brennstoff, ein schweizerisches Betriebsmittel entsprechender Art zu schaffen, nicht sehr gerecht.

Die Automobilisten sollen laut Gelpke für den Unterhalt und die Verbesserung der Strassen aufkommen. Sie sollen laut Klöti wenigstens teilweise die Zinsen der Bundesbahnen bezahlen. Und was noch? Ich kann mir zehn Pferde halten, wenn ich will, und die Strasse mit diesen zehn Pferden schlimmer herichten als mit einem kleinen bescheidenen Automobil, und es kostet mich keinen Rappen Steuer. Wenn ich aber diese zehn Pferde aus Fleisch und Blut in ein Motorpferd aus Eisen und Benzin verwandle, dann kommt die Steuer, ob ich fahre oder nicht. Man hat schon schwer, solches zu begreifen. Wieviel schwerer hat man erst zu begreifen, dass das Automobil von 1927 für die Kriegsschulden aufzukommen habe!

Fabriken und Fabrikate.

Der Präsident des Verwaltungsrates der Brown, Boveri u. C. sagte in einem Vortrage, gehalten in der Statisch-volkswirtschaftl. Gesellschaft Basel vor dreiviertel Jahren, dass es unsern Maschinen-

fabriken nicht möglich sei, unter Anwendung der ausgeklügeltsten amerikanischen Methoden zu schaffen. Gut. Ist es aber notwendig, dass eine Fabrik gleichzeitig Stickmaschinen und Last-automobile herstellt wie die Aktiengesellschaft Adolph Sauerer in Arbon?

Ich empfehle irgend einem volkswirtschaftlichen Seminar der Schweiz als Thema für eine Doktorarbeit das folgende: "Die schädliche wirtschaftliche Auswirkung der Tatsache, dass in der kleinen Schweiz in der gleichen Fabrik verschiedene Fabrikate und in verschiedenen Fabriken die gleichen Fabrikate hergestellt werden."

Das heilige Mittagessen.

Man plant gegenwärtig auf der rechten Zürichseeseite die Einführung von beschleunigten Zügen, die einige Stationen von Zürich aus ohne Anhalt passieren. Eine alte gute Idee, die endlich ihrer Verwirklichung entgegengeht. Unerfreulich bei der ganzen Begründung ist bloss der Umstand, dass man das häusliche Mittagessen als positiven Grund für die Einführung solcher Züge aufzählt. Dann können nämlich auch die Bewohner der weiter abgelegenen Seegemeinden mittags schnell nach Hause fahren—als ob das zum Vorteil der Bundesbahnen wäre. Die S. B. B. erhalten nicht mehr, ob die Leute nachmittags nach Hause fahren oder nicht, handelt es sich ja doch bloss um Abonnenten. Die Tatsache selber führe ich hier nur an, um wieder einmal auf unsere sehr ökonomische und auch menschlich nicht so günstig wie ein früher Feierabend auswirkende Zerteilung des Tages aufmerksam zu machen. Wir scheinen vom ausgiebigen, zeitraubenden Mittagessen nie loskommen zu können!

Im Heft 3 der *Schweizerischen Bauzeitung*, das ich in der Bibliothek durchblätterte, hatte eine eifriger Leser einem Satz von Generaldirektor Schraft ("Es wird eine Beschränkung der Vorteile des Automobiltransportes auf ein vernünftiges Mass in Erwägung zu ziehen sein") mit einer kleinen Anmerkung versehen. Sie hies: "Die Nachteile der Bahn beseitigen wäre besser!"

Diesem unbekanntem Leser, der sich genötigt fühlte, den Bleistift aus der Tasche zu ziehen, möchte ich gerne die Hand drücken.

Eine Kleine Anmerkung und ein grosser Andrang.

In der N. Z. Z. steht folgende Mitteilung: (Eing.) "Wegen des grossen Andranges werden Audienzen nur noch Samstag nachmittags 2-4 Uhr erteilt. In der Zwischenzeit sind Gesuche schriftlich einzureichen. Bis heute sind 724 Fälle behandelt worden..."

Um was handelt es sich? Warum, woher, wozu der grosse Andrang? Es handelt sich um das zürchische Komitee zur Bekämpfung des Selbstmordes.

Derart ist unsere Zeit: Wir lesen jeden Tag einmal oder zweimal, was in der Welt geschieht. Ein Geschehnis im hintersten Hinterindien erreicht uns ein paar Stunden darauf. Im Radio hören wir die halbe Welt. Doch von unserem Nächsten wissen wir nichts. Die menschliche Gesellschaft gleicht einer Gesellschaft, die den Kopfhörer hermetisch über den Ohren, nichts mehr vom Nebenmenschen hört—doch stolz ist, die Stimme New Yorks zu vernehmen.

Glücklicherweise ist dieses Komitee in Zürich gegründet worden, um abzuhelfen dem grossen schweizerischen Andrange—zum Selbstmord.

—Felix Moeschlin in "N.Z."

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