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Where are you going to-day? To Herne Hill, for the Swiss Sports, of course!

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HOME NEWS

It is officially stated that the resignation of Mr. Alfred Oswald as Honorary Swiss Consul in Glasgow has been accepted by the Federal Council with the usual thanks for services rendered. The Swiss Consulate in Glasgow will, for the present, be in the charge of the consular attaché Friedrich Kästli, from Seedorf (Berne).

At a conference in Bulle of Swiss tobacco manufacturers, Federal Councillor Müsy stated that the consumption of cigarettes in Switzerland amounted to about 1,200 million annually; a duty of half a centime per cigarette (one penny for twenty) would secure for the Federal Treasury six million francs per year, while up till now the whole of the import duties on raw and manufactured tobaccos scarcely exceeded three millions per annum. He thought the latter figure could, without great hardship to anybody, be increased to about 30 million francs, or, on an average, tax of about Frs. 7 per head of the population. The present tobacco duties worked out at under a franc per head, compared with Frs. 15 in Austria, Frs. 16 in Sweden, Frs. 17 in America and Frs. 27 in England.

On the ground of irregularity, the Federal Tribunal has cancelled the election of a Justice of the Peace which took place last December in St. Gingolph (Valais). Of the two candidates, the Conservative nominee had received 53 votes, against the 52 in favour of the Liberal, but it was subsequently discovered that the number of voting slips deposited exceeded that of those entitled to vote.

The Zurich town council, which is controlled by a Socialist-Communist majority, has decided to send a memorandum to the Federal Council expressing congratulations on the settlement of the Russian conflict and the hope that steps will be taken to facilitate commercial relations between the two countries.

The Basle Regierungsrat proposes to the Grosse Rat to take over the deficit of Frs. 460,000 resulting from the "Inland Navigation" Exhibition held in that town last summer. This sum is in addition to Frs. 285,000, which has been subscribed by the promoters "à fonds perdus."

The enactment of the proposed amusement tax is not to be proceeded with in the canton Aargau on the grounds that the income derived by the State would be small, that it would not have the desired effect of curtailing amusements, and that the present attitude of the electors is decidedly against any new legislation.

Initiated in 1897 by Jean Marty, who emigrated to Riga, the income on a school fund of nearly Frs. 340,000 is for the first time this year being utilised for the education of poor children in the canton of Glaris. The benefactor deposited at that time about 941 florins, with the stipulation that this sum should be invested at 4½%, remain intact, and be allowed to accumulate for 120 years.

Through taking a road bend at too great a speed, Karl Allemann, aged 37, a teacher in Grenchen (Solothurn), lost control of his car, which overturned; he was picked up dead whilst two colleagues of his, whom he had taken out for a spin, escaped with slight injuries. The victim had only the day before obtained the certificate entitling him to drive a car.

The wife of Prof. Dr. Fehr, of the Berne University, was killed in a motor accident near Fribourg. Her body was found beneath her car

in a ditch, and it is surmised that the car was overturned when overrunning the road bank.—A similar fate befell a postman, Fritz Stämpfli, from Neuenegg (Berne), whose motor cycle turned a somersault when he found it necessary suddenly to apply the brake.

In an attempt to effect the ascent of the Great Mythen from the difficult western wall, a member of the climbing party, H. Kunz, aged 42, on the staff of a Zurich insurance company, lost his life.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Swiss Motor Bill.

The rejection by the Swiss people of the motor bill is quoted by most of the English dailies as a proof of the inefficiency of the referendum. Undoubtedly in the present instance this assertion is not without justification, especially when we bear in mind that this essential and progressive Bill has been discussed and dissected for two years by both the States and National Councils, and has finally been approved by overwhelming majorities in the two chambers. The following article is taken from the *Manchester Guardian* (May 17th):

The Swiss people once again confirmed the negative tendency of the referendum by rejecting the Bill on motor-cars and bicycles which had been approved by the Swiss Parliament by an overwhelming majority. The total vote for the Bill was 225,000, and against it 329,000.

The Bill had been adopted by Parliament as the only possible compromise between two opposed policies: one in favour of greater freedom for motor cars and cyclists; the other in favour of greater restriction on those means of communication and fuller protection of pedestrians against road traffic dangers. After two years of Parliamentary discussion, the compromise Bill was almost unanimously adopted by both Houses. But outside Parliament a strong protest movement against the Bill was organised. Motorists complained that the proposed speed limit of 50 kilometres an hour (about 30 miles per hour) outside towns was too low, the pedestrians that it was too high. Motor-car clubs protested against the Bill because the motorist is made responsible for any injury to a cyclist or pedestrian unless he can prove his complete innocence; pedestrians protest because the proposed obligatory insurance of the motorist against accidents caused by him shifts all financial risk on to the insurance companies, thus greatly weakening the motorists' sense of responsibility. The joint opposition of two diametrically opposed sides was reinforced by the opposition of the hotel industry and others connected with foreign visitors. It was feared that the obligatory insurance which would have to be applied to foreign motor-cars would cause a boycott of Swiss roads by foreigners. Finally, the cyclists protested against the maintenance of the obligatory number shield, which is considered a humiliation.

Last week 181 members of Parliament out of 200 from all political parties issued a common manifesto requesting the nation to recognise the necessity for some compromise and not to destroy the laborious Parliamentary work of more than two years. But their almost despairing eleventh-hour effort was in vain, and a state of great confusion is left.

Population of Switzerland.

The official statistics with reference to the last census, taken over seven years ago, have recently been published; they form the subject of an instructive survey in the *Economist* (May 14th):—

The Swiss Bureau of Statistics has recently issued a complete and detailed study of the results of the 1920 population census of Switzerland. In 1920 Switzerland had a residing population of 3,876,922, an increase of roughly 127,000 persons over 1910, of which one-fifth only was formed of males and four-fifths of females. A striking fact is that births have very little to do with that increase, as their number has fallen by 90,000 during these 10 years, and that immigration mainly accounts for the increase. In 1910 there were 552,011 foreigners

ANNIVERSARIES OF SWISS EVENTS.

May 30th, 1887.—Landslip near Spiringen (Canton Uri).

June 1st, 1906.—Opening of the Simplon Tunnel.

June 2nd, 1884.—Unveiling of the monument of General Dufour at Geneva.

June 3rd, 1653.—Battle near Wohlenschwil (at the time of the Peasants' War). The peasants had assembled to defend their rights. Niklaus Leuenberger advanced against Bern with 20,000 men and forced the Government to a peace in which great concessions were made to the insurgents, but under the insidious condition that the Bernese peasants should lay down their arms and withdraw from the Huttwil League. Meanwhile, from Zurich, under Gen. Werdmüller, a force of 9,000 men had invaded the Freiamt. On June 3rd, at Wohlenschwil, the peasants attacked the army of Zurich. The well-served artillery of this force inspired the peasants with such respect that they began to despair of the possibility of a victory and asked for a truce. The peasants agreed to lay down their arms immediately.

June 4th, 1352.—Glarus joins the Confederation.

June 6th, 1799.—First battle at Zurich, between the Archduke Charles and Field-Marshal Hotze and the French, under the command of Gen. Massena. Massena had to evacuate Zurich, and retired to a fortified place on the Utilberg and Albis, from which, however, he broke forth in the autumn of the same year.

June 6th, 1653.—Two days' battle at Gislikon. The Lucerne men, under the command of Schybis, unwilling to lay down their arms to the National troops, under the command of Col. Zwyer, attacked them at the Bridge of Gislikon. Although this was indecisive, among the peasants of Lucerne the longing for peace got the upper hand, and they agreed to accept the arbitration of the rural Cantons, which condemned them to the handing over of twelve of their ringleaders. Most of their grievances, however, received no further consideration.

residing in Switzerland, 67,129 were naturalised up to 1920, and there were only 402,385 in 1920, as a great number of them went back to their native country during the war, while many Swiss families which had been living abroad came back and settled in the mother country. Another striking fact is the continuous decrease of the agricultural population since 1860, when one-half of the population of Switzerland lived on agriculture. Since then the population has steadily increased, but the towns chiefly benefited, while the rural population progressively decreased. In 1900 there were still 1,035,000 persons living on agriculture, but that number came down to 964,000 in 1910, and to 960,000 in 1920, when it represented 26.3 per cent. of the total population, against 50 per cent. in 1860. But while the rural population has decreased in number, its importance in Swiss politics has developed so much that it now constitutes the most powerful section, thanks to its effective organisation, and the Government would be powerless without its support. The number of persons employed in industry and arts and crafts suffered no great modification during the first 20 years of the century; while industrial workers and craftsmen formed 46 per cent. of the population in 1910, they formed 45 per cent. in 1920. But a curious instance is the progressive disappearance of independent workers—those who are working at home or running small workshops of their own. These were 70,000 in 1910, and only 39,000 were left in 1920. They have been attracted and absorbed by the big factories and commercial undertakings, the staffs of which have risen from 57,000 to 76,000 from 1910 to 1920, as well as by transport undertakings and Government services. Independent workers represented 21.6 per cent. of the population in 1910, and only 19.7 per cent. in 1920. The number of

persons employed on the railways is nine times higher than in 1860, and that of persons employed in the post, telegraph and telephone services is 13 times higher. From 1910 to 1920 the number of persons occupied in trade, banking and insurance companies has risen from 55 to 77 per cent., the number of Government officials has increased from 8.9 per cent. to 14.9 per cent., and the number of those employed in education has risen by 10,000. Switzerland has too many brain workers for her population, a consequence of the great development of State education, and she is not in a position to provide trade and industry with the workers they need. The result is that a great proportion of manual workers is drawn from foreign immigrants, and that Swiss intellectuals find it difficult to earn their living in the country, and are compelled to emigrate or to accept situations for which they have not been trained.

Swiss Railway Electrification.

Practically all the English papers are commenting on the steady progress made in the electrification of our railway system in view of the important Geneva-Berne sector nearing completion. The following is from *Motor Transport* (May 14th):—

Considerable progress is being made in the electrification of the Swiss Federal and allied railway systems. By the middle of this month electrically-driven trains will be running over the whole of the Lausanne-Berne line. This line passes through 61 miles of green, orchard-filled valleys, but always within sight of the Jungfrau and the towering peaks of the Oberland mountains. Increased speed, absolute cleanliness, and greater tractive powers are among the results which are calculated to appeal to the tourist. Astonishing improvements have been made in the few years that have elapsed since the first electric train passed through the St. Gothard. The line between Lausanne and Romont (21 miles) rises 860ft., and over this gradient an electric locomotive recently drew a 200-ton train at 40 miles an hour on the steepest section and at 50 miles an hour on the less severe slopes. The electrification of this line will complete the change-over on the Geneva-Berne-St. Margrethen system, linking France with Austria across Switzerland. Another line just electrified is the Ricken railway, connecting Rapperswill with Wattwill. The Swiss Federal Railway authorities estimate that after the completion in 1929 of their present plans an annual saving approaching £2,000,000 will result from economies in fuel, rolling stock and staff, and that these savings will be accompanied by a more frequent and speedier train service.

From the Geneva Music Exhibition.

The Referee (May 15th) takes us back to the early days of the Geneva Conservatoire, when the illustrious Liszt failed to conquer the hearts of the local ladies:—

How many people remember that the illustrious Liszt once taught the piano in the Geneva Conservatoire?

Geneva was his first place of retreat when he ran away with the Comtesse d'Agout; and its Conservatoire of Music was just then being founded.

It was a very modest institution. Its modesty may be gauged by the fact that the stipend of its director was only £40 a year. Liszt, however, was enthusiastic about it, and offered his gratuitous services.

Not everyone was pleased. A lady teacher, hearing that she would have to work under his direction, flung her resignation at the director's head, saying that she did not feel that she possessed the qualifications which would fit her to fill a subordinate position.

But she was not, as she had expected, begged to remain. Her resignation was accepted, and her subordinate position was filled, at Liszt's suggestion, by a boy of fifteen.

Retrenchment as well as reform seems to have been the object of this change in the personnel. Liszt drew no salary. The only reward which he consented to receive for his services was the honorary title of professor in an institution in which the other teachers were described as "masters," and a gold watch and chain, presented to him as a souvenir on his departure.

His attention to his duties was consequently only intermittent, with the result that the following note appears in the minutes of a meeting of the Conservatoire governors: "He (Liszt) is satisfied with the ladies. As for the men, he is so dissatisfied with them that he does not mean to teach them any longer."

His satisfaction with the ladies, however, was only relative, as is proved by his "reports" on their progress, entered in a book which is now one of the most treasured possessions of the Conservatoire. These are often severe and sarcastic.

He complains of the "wriggling and grimaces of one of them. He sums a second up ironically as "artiste Genevoise"! He completely ignores the musical attainments of a

third, merely recording that she has "beautiful eyes."

Of course, he gave concerts as well as music lessons. The audience at one of his concerts included George Sand, Balzac, Victor Hugo, and Alexandre Dumas.

His fee for a performance was £20, but he did not always draw crowded houses. Many Genevan ladies boycotted his recitals as a protest against his "scandalous private life," with the result that he often played to a beggarly array of empty benches.

EIDGENÖSSISCHE GLOSSEN.

Nein-Sager.

Die letzte eidgenössische Abstimmung stellt unserer politischen Reife kein gutes Zeugnis aus. Wenn man in Berücksichtigung zieht, dass eine solche Selbstverständlichkeit wie die Erhöhung der Bundessubvention für die Alpenstrassen mit rund 200,000 Neinsagern zu rechnen hatte (zwei Fünftel der Stimmenden), so muss man annehmen, dass auch das Automobilgesetz hauptsächlich aus der Freude am Neinsagen verworfen worden ist. Diese Feststellung ist in keiner Hinsicht erfreulich, weder für die, die auf ein besseres Automobilgesetz hoffen, noch für die, die heute von einer Volksabstimmung etwas Wesentliches erwarten. Man wird es eine Zeitlang aus pädagogischen Gründen hoffentlich nicht vergessen, dass es der Kanton Aargau sogar zustande brachte, die Subvention der Alpenstrassen zu verwerfen (in elf Kantonen bewegte sich die Zahl der Ja-Sagenden nur zwischen 50 und 60 Prozent der Stimmenden), so wenig man es vergessen wird, dass es bei uns eine politische Kinderpolitik gibt, die aus lauter Aegerg über die Zumutung, stimmen zu müssen, sogar im Bündnerland 3000 Mann sammeln konnte—gegen die dem Kanton zukommende Erhöhung der Strassenabstimmung! Wenn wir die Demokratie lächerlich machen wollen, so sind wir auf dem besten Wege.

Der Teufel an der Wand.

Phantasie und Wirklichkeit oder "Die Russen müssen an allem schuld sein": Die *Gazette de Lausanne* kommentierte die Verwerfung des Automobilgesetzes mit der Bemerkung, dass man den Grund für die gewaltige ablehnende Mehrheit der Kantone Waadt und Freiburg im Missvergnügen über den Berliner Friedensschluss mit den Russen suchen müsse... in Wirklichkeit bestand die ablehnende Mehrheit aus einer Minderheit, denn sowohl im Waadtland wie im Freiburgischen war man für das Automobilgesetz.

Die ausserordentlichen Leistungen der Bundesbahnen.

Generaldirektion und Verwaltungsrat der Schweizerischen Bundesbahnen haben einen reich dokumentierten, sachlichen Bericht herausgegeben über die ausserordentlichen Leistungen und Lasten, die den Schweizerischen Bundesbahnen in ihrer Eigenschaft als Staatsbahn in den Kriegs- und Nachkriegsjahren auferlegt wurden. Den Zahlen und Begründungen schliessen sich Anzüge aus den Protokollen des Verwaltungsrates an, die beweisen, dass man schon seit 1916 immer wieder der Belastung der Bundesbahnen mit bahnfremden Aufgaben und Leistungen kritisiert hat. Man werde also, meint der Verwaltungsrat, dem obersten Organe der Bundesbahnenverwaltung nicht vorhalten können, dass es sich nicht rechtzeitig für die Abwälzung der Kosten von allgemeinen staatspolitischen Leistungen verwendet habe. Nein, diesen Vorwurf wird man nach Lektüre dieser Protokolle nicht mehr erheben, dafür aber den andern: dass sich die oberste Leitung nicht mit genügendem Nachdruck zur Wehr gesetzt habe. Es blieb bei platonischen Protesten, man hat nicht alle Mittel der Verteidigung, die möglich gewesen wären, benützt. Diese Tatsache führt wieder einmal zur Konstatierung, dass es den Bundesbahnen besser gegangen wäre, wenn es sich um kantonale Teilbahnen gehandelt hätte, denn dann hätten sich die Vertreter der Kantone zu Wort gemeldet, die Kantonsregierungen wären in Bern vorstellig geworden usw. Die Bundesbahnen stehen in dieser Hinsicht viel wehrloser da dank der Tatsache, dass sie im Parlamente nicht vertreten sind, bloss ihr Personal.

Zwei andere Bemerkungen, zu denen man durch die Lektüre des Berichtes geführt wird, seien hier angefügt: Dank unseres recht komplizierten Systems der Taxenfestsetzung sind in der Schweiz die Taxerhöhungen immer zu spät gekommen. Als man Geld hatte in der goldenen Zeit der Kriegsgewinne, ist man billig gefahren. Als man keines mehr hatte—wurden die Taxen erhöht. In Zukunft werden sich die Bundesbahnen das Recht nehmen müssen, sich rascher anpassen zu dürfen. Ferners: Durch Bundesgesetz von 1920 ist die Frist zur Tilgung des Anlagekapitals der S.B.B. von 60 auf 100 Jahre verlängert worden. Man wird sich gelegentlich fragen müssen, ob man mit diesem Beschlusse nicht etwas zu weit gegangen ist und dank ihm in einer Illusionswirtschaft dahingleibt, die uns die Dinge besser zeigt, als sie sind. Wenn schon heute das Auftauchen der Automobile eine Sachlage schafft, die nicht ohne Auswirkung auf die Bundesbahnen geblieben ist, wer soll dann wissen, was nicht etwa erst in 50 oder hundert Jahren, sondern in zehn oder 20 Jahren geschehen wird? Alles spricht dafür, dass wir die stabilen

Zustände mit labileren vertauscht haben und dass man nicht mehr vertrauensvoll und zuversichtlich Einrichtungen irgend welcher Art treffen kann, die ganz ruhig mit ähnlichen äusseren Bedingungen auf Dutzende von Jahren hinaus rechnen dürfen. Man wird also vielleicht diesen Beschluss von 1920 wieder revidieren, wenn dadurch auch die Bilanz der S.B.B. schlechter wird. Denn eine unangenehme Wahrheit ist immer besser als eine angenehme Lüge.

Man kann die ausserordentlichen Leistungen und Lasten in zwei Arten gliedern: Erstens in jene, die durch den Krieg, die Beanspruchung durch andere öffentliche Betriebe, durch die besondere Stellung als Staatsbetrieb mit weitgehender aufgenötigter sozialer Verflechtung entstanden sind; zweitens in jene, die politischen Erwägungen zuzuschreiben sind. Die Aufstellung der S.B.B. nennt erstens: Militär- und Kriegstransporte: 16.3 Millionen. Anschaffung von Güterwagen zur Sicherung der Landesversorgung: 30 Millionen. Notstandsarbeiten: 52 Millionen. Einführung der elektrischen Zugförderung: 40 Millionen. Verluste infolge der Uebernahme der Kohlen der Kohlengeossenschaft: 47.5 Millionen. Verzicht auf Personalentlassungen, trotz starken Verkehrsrückganges, im Hinblick auf die im Lande bestehende Arbeitslosigkeit: 32.4 Millionen. Lasten infolge Ausdehnung der Personalversicherung: 141 Millionen. Total 359.2 Millionen. Die ausführliche Begründung dieser ausserordentlichen Leistungen und Belastungen ist überzeugend. Hier besteht ganz sicherlich die Verpflichtung des Bundes, helfend, das heisst zahlend einzugreifen. Es geht nicht an, direkte oder indirekte Mobilisationskosten einem Geschäftsbetriebe aufzubürden.

Zu diskutieren ist die Belastung aus Leistungen auf Grund politischer Erwägungen, die mit der Summe von 100 Millionen angegeben ist und sich auf die Aufhebung der Bergzuschläge und anderer Tarifmassnahmen zu Gunsten des Tessins und Genfs gründet. Hier wird man nach wie vor der Meinung sein dürfen, dass die Bergzuschläge schon längst hätten aufgehoben werden müssen. Die Politik hat hier eine Besserung der Zustände gebracht, die ohne Politik schon früher hätte kommen müssen, wenn man die Bundesbahnen als eine Einheit betrachtet, die das ganze Land nicht in regionale, sondern in eidgenössischer Weise erfasst nach dem Prinzip, dass die dank einfachen natürlichen Bedingungen billig gebauten Linien an die Kosten der andern Linien beizutragen haben. Denn Bundesbahnen haben wirklich nur einen Sinn, wenn sie aus dem Gedanken des Bundes eine Tatsache machen. Solche Tarifmassnahmen wären also geschäftlich zu lösen und nicht durch Beitrag des

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