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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

During discussion of the new Swiss Penal Code in the National Council the inclusion of capital punishment was declined by a large majority, the minority mainly consisting of Catholic councillors.

In the municipal elections—Grosse Gemeinderat—at Winterthur which took place during the week-end, the Communists lost one of their two former seats; previous to the elections in 1925 they controlled four mandates. The Socialists maintained their strength and dispose of 27 out of 60 seats in the Council.

The Rev. Heinrich Urner, who for a short time officiated at the Swiss Church (Deutschschweiz, Gemeinde) in London, has been elected Hauptpfarrer at Liestal (Basel-Land) after an animated election campaign.

Two cyclists on the road from Altendorf to Pfäffikon (Schwytz) succeeded in stopping a car driven by a Zurich artiste, and after a heated altercation about his omission to dip his headlights, proceeded to maltreat him and his wife with their pocket-knives.

In an endeavour to avoid a collision, a large, closed car dashed through the heavy iron railings along the Limmat quay, near the Urania bridge (Zürich) and turned a somersault into the river. The owner-driver, Director Rud. Häuptli from the Plakat- und Propaganda-Gesellschaft, was subsequently extricated apparently alive but died before he could be removed to the hospital.

In consequence of an explosion in a chemist's shop belonging to Dr. Aisslinger in Zurich, two female attendants lost their lives; the cause of the accident is said to have been the striking of a match by one of the victims close to an oil container.

Alt-Landammann J. K. Lutz, a former National Councillor and distinguished leader in cantonal politics, died suddenly at Lutzenberg (Appenzell A.-Rh.) at the age of 87.

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

**Erfolge der Schweizer Uhrenindustrie im Ausland.**—Das Nationale Physikalische Laboratorium in Kew-Teddington (England) veröffentlicht alljährlich einen Bericht über die 50 besten Resultate, welche die Uhren erlangt haben, die ihm während des vorhergehenden Jahres von den Uhrenfabrikanten zur Beobachtung übergeben wurden.

So erfahren wir, dass unsere schweizerischen Fabrikanten im Jahre 1927 wiederum sehr gut klassiert sind. *Erst an 34. Stelle ist die erste ausländische Firma zu finden* (Smith & Son, Ltd., London), während die 33 ersten Plätze schweizerischen Fabrikanten zugefallen sind.

Nachstehend geben wir die 10 besten Resultate bekannt (Maximum 100 Punkte):

1. Fabriques Zenith, Le Locle. Taschenchronometer	45mm	96.2 P.
2. Fabriques Zenith, Le Locle. Deckchronometer	49 ..	96.0 ..
3. Francillon & Co., Fabr. des Longines, St. Imier. Deckchronometer	54 ..	95.7 ..
4. Fabriques Zenith, Le Locle. Taschenchronometer	45 ..	95.6 ..
5. Fabriques Movado, Chaux-de-Fonds. Deckchronometer	50 ..	95.5 ..
6. Louis Brandt & Frère, Fabr. Oméga, Biemme. Deckchronometer	48 ..	95.4 ..
7. Fabriques Zenith, Le Locle. Deckchronometer	65 ..	95.3 ..
8. Fabriques Zenith, Le Locle. Deckchronometer	65 ..	95.0 ..
9. Paul Dittsheim, Fabriques Solvil, Chaux-de-Fonds. Taschenchronom.	45 ..	94.9 ..
10. Louis Brandt & Frère, Fabriques Oméga, Biemme. Deckchronometer	48 ..	94.6 ..

An der Ehrenstelle finden wir die Uhrenfabrik Zenith, wie übrigens auch im Jahre 1926, die —bemerkenswerte Vollkommenheit obgleich — mit einem Taschenchronometer von 45 mm das beste Ergebnis erringen. Zenith, welche fünfmal unter den zehn ersten Resultaten zu finden ist, wird Zweite der Klassierung.

Mit wirklichem Vergnügen stellen wir die Erfolge der Wunderwerke unserer Chronometermacher fest, um so mehr als sie diese Erfolge nicht nur an schweizerischen Sternwarten, sondern auch im Auslande erlangt haben. Derart glänzende Resultate

wie die oben erwähnten, sind bezeichnend und ein bereiter Beweis für die Ueberlegenheit unserer schweizerischen Uhrenindustrie.

—*Technische Rundschau.*

**Ein Wallenstädter als Admiral.**—Der "Sarg. Volkszeitung" wird geschrieben, dass im Schweizer-amerikanischen Kalender das Bild des unionistischen Admirals Edward Walter Eberle enthalten sei. Die Biographie neben dem Bilde gibt über die Herkunft Eberles folgende Auskunft:

"Edward Walter Eberle wurde geboren am 17. August 1864 zu Denton, Texas, als Sohn des Joseph und der Marie Eberle-Stemmler. Sein Vater, Joseph Eberle, wanderte im Jahre 1847 von seiner Heimat Wallenstadt (Canton St. Gallen) nach Amerika aus, um dort sein Glück zu suchen. Der junge Schweizer zog nach dem Westen und liess sich in Fort Smith nieder (Staat Arkansas), siedelte dann nach Denton (Texas) über, kehrte aber 1865 wieder nach Fort Smith zurück, wo er bis zu seinem Tode 1877 verblieb. Fort Smith ist heute noch der offizielle Wohnsitz der Familie Eberle. Vater Eberle wurde bei Ausbruch des Bürgerkrieges ausgezogen und machte als Offizier den ganzen Feldzug mit. Auch in öffentlichen Aemtern wirkte Vater Eberle mit.—Ober er wohl seinem Sohn nie erzählt hat von den stolzen Churfürsten und dem blauen Wallensee?"

Vater Eberle liess seinem begabten Sohne Edward Walter eine gediegene Bildung zukommen, um denselben in eine Marineakademie in Annapolis zu bringen. Er knüpfte enge Freundschaft mit dem Vorsteher dieser Akademie, Wilbur. Dann kam Aufstieg am Aufstiege, bis Wilson ihn im Jahre 1918 zum Conteradmiral auszog, mit Sitz in Washington. Edward Walter Eberle bekleidete 1921 bis 1923 den höchsten Posten, den die amerikanische Flotte zu verzeichnen hat. Am Ende dieses Jahres will Admiral Eberle sich zurückziehen."

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

### The Stockport Comedy.

With reference to the power generating stations erected by Swiss manufacturers in this country we have already reproduced the reports based on actual experience from the municipal undertakings at York, Newport and Edinburgh; the fourth is at Dublin, whose City Electrical Engineer gives the following account in the *Electrician* (March 2nd):—

"As a friend and admirer of the extremely able and active Director of B.E.A.M.A., I was very grieved at the contents of the brochure "Foreign Plant in British Power Stations."

Desperate diseases sometimes demand and justify desperate remedies, but assuredly the British electrical manufacturing industry is not in such a parlous condition as would provoke the issue of statements so obviously capable of misleading the public. So far as one can judge the industry in question is in a remarkably strong and flourishing condition; in fact, it is one of the few British industries which are prosperous.

Personally I am entirely in favour of giving a reasonable price preference to home manufacturers, and I have always given such a preference to goods made in this country. But there is a very decided difference between giving a reasonable price preference and giving *carte blanche* to any ring of home manufacturers to exploit local or national patriotism.

I have been drawn into this discussion mainly by the fact that Dublin has been set out in the brochure in question as one of the power stations which have in recent times installed steam turbines made in Switzerland. No definite statement has been made to the effect that the Dublin electricity supply undertaking has suffered financially by having installed Swiss turbines instead of British machines, but the obvious inference in the pamphlet is that all the purchasers of Swiss turbines have incurred substantial loss by reason of high steam consumption.

Figures have been set out for Newport (Mon.), Edinburgh and York, purporting to give the losses sustained by those undertakings as a result of the use of Swiss steam turbines. These figures have been made out in such a manner that they are not worthy of serious comment. One can only express astonishment at the fact that any responsible organisation should publish anything of the kind. No doubt the engineers of the three undertakings mentioned will deal effectively with the figures in question.

So far as Dublin is concerned, all I can say is that the Swiss turbine steam consumption

figures have invariably been better than the British, that the guaranteed figures have always been improved upon in practice, and that the capital cost has given substantial advantage to the purchaser. In the case of the last steam turbine purchased by Dublin from a Swiss firm, the steam consumption figures were better than the best British figures, and the price of the turbo-alternator was 43 per cent. lower than the lowest British tender.

It is suggested in this pamphlet that British manufacturers cannot compete against those of Switzerland unless British wages and the whole British standard of living be reduced. Some little time ago I took the trouble to investigate the wages position as between Switzerland and Great Britain, and I found that the hourly rate paid to unskilled labour in Switzerland was considerably higher, and the rate to skilled labour slightly lower than in Great Britain, the average being rather higher in Switzerland. Any inability to compete with Switzerland cannot, therefore, be attributed to wages. I have had considerable experience of labour and other conditions in Switzerland, and I can say definitely that labour there is distinctly happier than in Great Britain. The social conditions in Switzerland might well be taken as a model for all industrial countries.

It might repay investigation to discover how it comes that Switzerland, who has to import all her raw material and pay the same wages, can compete successfully with British manufacturers in their own market.

It might well be asked why the B.E.A.M.A. thinks it worth while to attack a few Swiss manufacturers who supply only a negligible fraction of the British market. The reason is not far to seek. Although the Swiss steam turbines purchased by British electricity undertakings form such a small percentage of the whole, their prices form a useful criterion of the prices put forward by the British firms. If those few Swiss firms could be eliminated, the home manufacturers could dictate terms to the purchaser. The day when this objective is attained will be a bad day, not only for the British purchaser, but also for the British manufacturer. An industry which can dictate terms to the public will have no incentive to render itself more efficient—it will simply make the public pay for inefficiency.

The B.E.A.M.A. can scarcely have hoped that their statements would go without contradiction. The good sense of the average purchaser may still be relied upon, and supply engineers and undertakings will not be intimidated by such tactics."

In spite of these refutations and contradictions from the only parties that can speak on the basis of actual and prolonged experience, the B.E.A.M.A. continues to issue to the English Press statements that are evidently meant to mislead public opinion; there are several other tenders in the market, notably one of £250,000 for Leeds, which at all costs must not go abroad. We quite admit and appreciate the argument that from an economic point of view the placing of such orders abroad is far more detrimental to a satisfactory solution of the unemployment problem in this country than the apparent difference in price could compensate and we also recognise that it is most desirable to influence the authorities concerned with this postulate; what we cannot understand is the expedient of introducing controversial and wholly erroneous arguments, and thus weakening an otherwise strong case. It is also unfortunate that this patriotic and economic truth is advanced by the manufacturers, and that the official spokesmen of English Labour, which should in the first instance benefit, are not at all inclined to subscribe to it, ascribing to the manufacturers a desire to unduly exploit the patriotism of local councils. A very unconvincing and misleading explanation has been sent by Mr. Hugh Quigley, one of the officials of the B.E.A.M.A., to the *Manchester Guardian*, in which our great contemporary is accused of "distorting facts to fit in with prejudices." The long document is published in its issue of March 2nd and suitably dealt with; it contains one or two novel insinuations which will interest our readers. Mr. Quigley asserts that "a special delegation from the Stockport Electricity Committee went at the invitation of the Swiss firm to inspect several stations and for a little over a week was under the constant influence of Swiss propaganda." From this we would have concluded that the party had a ripping time in Switzerland, but this is what one of the Stockport Councillors states in the *Manchester Guardian* (March 3rd):—

"I notice in to-day's *Manchester Guardian* a letter from Mr. Quigley, in which he states that the deputation to Switzerland went at the invitation of the Swiss firm. I should like to say that this statement is incorrect. The actual facts are as follows:—

At an open Council meeting it was proposed by the Conservative party (in the person of Ald. McGregor), and eventually agreed, that a special committee be set up with power to go abroad and see as much electrical plant as possible which had been built and installed by Messrs. Escher Wyss; also to investigate and inspect any other type or make of plant with which they came into contact. After a full and very comprehensive inspection they were to return and report to Council. This they did. All arrangements were made by the Stockport Council for this delegation, and all the expenses were allotted before the delegation left Stockport. These expenses were met in their entirety by the Corporation.

The former bogey of cheaper wages having been laid, Mr. Quigley now nonchalantly informs the British public "that the Swiss price was definitely a dumping price which had no relation to the costs of production." We surmise that according to Mr. Quigley's estimation the plant supplied some years ago by another Swiss firm at 43% below English prices as well as the numerous installations erected in all parts of the globe for the best part of a generation and still going strong, have all been turned out at dumping prices. It is surprising that our electrical industry has managed during all this time to keep out of the bankruptcy court and return dividends to its shareholders. The truth is that when Mr. Quigley and his friends were disporting themselves on English public school grounds, Swiss engineers were already devising and constructing power generating plants and that their English competitors of recent creation are beginning to realise that they still have a good deal to learn. Mr. Quigley, no doubt, means well for his country but there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in his philosophy.

An instructive article, dealing with this question from the economic aspect, is published in the *Yorkshire Herald* of March 1st. Unfortunately, it contains the usual unwarranted references to the 80% higher efficiency of English plant and to the excessive losses incurred by the four English electricity undertakings operating Swiss plant.

#### The Basle Mission.

The following from the *Financial News* (March 2nd) shows some of the difficulties to be overcome before this long overdue claim can be disposed of:—

"The Directors of the Commonwealth Trust, Ltd., refer in a circular to a statement by Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords on February 22nd, that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had offered to restore to the Basle Mission Trading Co. certain properties which the Commonwealth Trust hold and administer. Lord Salisbury (the circular says) omitted to state that those properties were legally vested in the Trust, and that under the existing law Ministers had no power to alienate them without the Trust's consent. The directors had no knowledge of the offer thus made by the Secretary for the Colonies.

A letter received from the Colonial Office dated February 27th says:—

"It has now been decided by the Cabinet that an essential element of any settlement must be the restoration to the Basle Trading Society of their properties in the Gold Coast, now held by the Commonwealth Trust, and Mr. Amery trusts that arrangements may be made to this end without recourse to legislation.

Mr. Amery is prepared to secure repayment to the Trust of a share of their original capital proportionate to the Gold Coast share of the total assets of the Basle Trading Company in India and the Gold Coast. This share would amount to approximately two-thirds. In addition it would be possible to consider whether some payment could be made on account of arrears of interest, and the question of compensating employees would remain for discussion, though no promise can be made in regard to either of these matters.

The decision of the Government relates at present only to the properties in the Gold Coast, and does not in any way commit the Government of India to any action."

In view of this letter, the directors foreshadow a shareholders' meeting at the earliest possible date."

#### The Basle Fair.

The following encouraging notice has been sent by Lord Strathspey to the Press and is taken from the *Daily Telegraph* (March 7th):—

"British industry has achieved so noteworthy a victory at our record Fair that I may be pardoned for suggesting that we might look to Europe and overseas for other fields to conquer.

If business men from abroad have found it profitable to visit our Fair, might our own business men not find it equally profitable to mingle in the Fairs of other lands? Yet I find that last year the number of British business men who

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thought it worth while to see the Swiss Industries Fair at Basle was just—eleven! We were the sixth country in their visiting list, France leading with 679 commercial ambassadors and Germany coming a close second with 666.

Ought not that sorry record to be improved when the Basle Fair once again opens its doors next month, from April 14th-24th? Switzerland is a prosperous country, with a large demand for the textiles, machinery and so on, that we could give her. Nevertheless, I find that, while she does purchase more cotton goods from us than from any of her neighbours, we are beaten in woollen goods by France and Germany; by these countries and by the United States and Italy in machinery, iron and in total purchases made; for by a dramatic coincidence we are sixth on the list of countries who visit the Swiss Industries Fair, and fifth amongst the nations with whom Switzerland does trade."

### DU BALLON, DE LA PEINE CAPITALE ET DE L'OBJECTIF!

Depuis une semaine, tout le pays romand est secoué par un événement qui dépasse en importance la grave question des zones, et ce n'est pas peu dire! Il s'agit d'un match de football tout simplement! la rencontre franco-suisse. C'est une véritable frénésie.

Les boîtes, même ceux qui ont dépassé 80 ans, tiennent des propos d'une technique abasourdisante; les enfants dans leur poussette expliquent comment on déclanche une attaque et prennent des crises de larmes ou de rage si les parents incongrus se proposent de les laisser à la maison pour se rendre seuls à la Pontaise. Or, ce match fut une victoire pour nos couleurs; victoire indiscutable, puisque nous menions par 4 buts à 0 à un moment donné. Comme par la suite les vaillants tricolores réussirent à blesser, volontairement ou "involontairement," trois des nôtres, c'est 8 hommes contre 11 que la seconde mi-temps vit sur le terrain et les buts de s'amasser contre nous, pas suffisamment pourtant pour nous arracher le trophée. Ce fut du délire!

D'après une statistique des gendarmeries vaudoise et genevoise, on compte 32 accidents d'autos, peu graves—la plupart un parcrotte torlo—le long de la route suisse, au retour de la file indienne des machines à moteur...

Cet événement sensationnel a fait oublier la fin de la séance tenue par le Conseil de la Société des Nations, séance dont il me faut malgré tout vous dire quelques mots. Emonvante elle fut, parce qu'au moment où éclatait à tous les yeux l'état d'impuissance où la mettaient des textes trop restreints et des traités qui la paralysaient, la Société des Nations a, en dépit de tout, rétabli sa situation entière et son autorité complète; simplement par le fait que les nations mécontentes n'ont pas eu le courage de brusquer l'opinion publique mondiale que l'Institution de Genève incarne. C'est ma seule réponse aux détracteurs de l'œuvre wilsonienne qui s'en vont déclarant partout, cette semaine, que "Genève" a fait faillite. Non! La Société des Nations n'a pas fait faillite. Mais c'est par un respect basé sur tout autre chose que sur des textes qu'elle impose ses volontés.

Le Conseil national a enfin abordé, ces dernières semaines, ce code pénal fédéral dont on parle depuis, semble-t-il, des dizaines d'années. Le projet, qui est dû en grande partie au distingué professeur de l'université de Genève, M. Logoz, a rencontré l'opposition irréductible de deux catégories principales de gens.

Tout d'abord ceux qui estiment qu'un code pénal fédéral porterait une atteinte à la liberté des cantons, en un mot au fédéralisme, pour tendre à plus d'unité, à plus d'emprise de la part de la Confédération. Ensuite ceux qui désirent à tout prix voir figurer la peine de mort dans le projet. Nous avons entendu à ce sujet des remarques et des propos de la plus délicate saveur. On a déclaré à haute et intelligible voix que la peine de mort était d'essence divine. On a dit bien d'autres "cocasseries"!

Puis sont venus ceux qui cherchent habilement un compromis et qui proposaient en l'espèce de laisser aux cantons la décision suprême en la matière. Par 100 voix contre 20, notre corps législatif a décidé, au contraire, d'insérer un texte précis à cet égard dans le nouveau code. Puis, par 144

voix contre 38, il fut refusé aux cantons d'introduire la peine capitale sur leur territoire d'une façon détournée. Ainsi, le Conseil national affirme aux yeux du monde qu'il entend supprimer "l'exécution" sur tout le territoire de la Confédération.

Lorsque le peuple sera appelé à ratifier ou à désapprouver les décisions de ses représentants, c'est évidemment sur la question de la peine de mort que les discussions seront les plus après. Un compromis pourrait paraître plus habile. Une franche décision est certes plus humaine. Reste l'avis du Conseil des États. Mais il n'est pas à supposer qu'il viendra contredire celui du National.

Semaine chargée s'il en fut et discussion qui n'est pas prête de s'éteindre.

Il vient de se créer à Genève un mouvement unique en son genre jusqu'à l'heure présente en Suisse. Des amateurs de cinéma (non point des avaleurs de films) ont fondé un petit groupement dont le but est de présenter au public cultivé certains films qui sortent du domaine commercial, soit par leur valeur purement artistique, soit par les tendances toutes modernes qu'ils représentent. Jeux de lumières, imagerie de la pensée, réflexes et sensations saisis au vol; tels sont les "sujets" qui vont défiler à l'écran; et comme les rares films qui ont su grouper sur leur pellicule de telles sensations n'abondent pas, les programmes seront complétés par des documentaires de toute première valeur. Enfin, les metteurs en scène les plus audacieux comme les plus connus viendront exposer eux-mêmes, en des conférences contradictoires, leurs conceptions du cinéma. Dans la cité de Calvin, où toute nouvelle idée soulève une tempête dans un verre d'eau cette initiative est appelée à un gros retentissement.

Le Curieux.

#### QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.	Mar. 6		Mar. 13	
	Fr.	S.	Fr.	S.
Confederation 3% 1903	80.25	83.25		
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln.	101.75	101.25		
Federal Railways 3½% A-K	86.32	86.20		
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	102.32	102.30		
SHARES.				
	Nom.	Mar. 6	Mar. 13	
	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.	
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	831	791	
Credit Suisse	500	874	831	
Union de Banques Suisses	500	715	718	
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2885	2855	
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	4986	4925	
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000	3340	3350	
S.A. Brown Boveri	350	598	597	
C. F. Bally	1000	1472	1487	
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	948	941	
Entreprises Suiz. S.A.	1000	1217	1180	
Comp. de Navig. sur le Lac Léman	500	535	535	
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	100	275	278	
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	780	775	

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