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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Commission sitting at Lugano and studying the articles of the new Federal Penal Code has deleted a clause in Para. 7 to the effect that Swiss sentenced abroad for a criminal offence should thereby lose their civil rights in Switzerland.

The Federal Statistical Office will take a census of the industrial and agricultural occupations throughout Switzerland; the date has not yet been definitely fixed, but will probably be in the second half of August. Arrangements are also in preparation for taking a census of the population at the end of next year.

New regulations for fixing the speed of passenger and goods trains on the Federal Railway system are under consideration; the maximum speed for express trains provided with automatic brakes is to be 100 km. per hour.

In a bye-election for the fifth member of the Regierungsrat of the canton Aargau, Councillor Fritz Zaugg, the nominee of the Farmers' and Citizens' Party, was successful, gaining the seat with a small majority over his Cath. Conservative opponent.

The Basle Grosse Rat will be asked to vote a credit of Frs. 41,000 for the purpose of acquiring Hans Holbein's painting "The Judgment of Solomon," now in the possession of the Hohenzollern gallery, of Sigmaringen.

The driver of a taxi (Kurzmeier) which was engaged outside the railway station at Lucerne by a stranger, was subsequently found shot dead on his box at a short distance outside the town. Though the victim still had money on him, it is surmised that his fare intended to rob him but was disturbed. On the police being informed, a search was at once organised in the lesser hotels during the night; when the detectives tried to force a locked bedroom door they heard a revolver being discharged and later found a man had committed suicide. The latter has been identified as an habitual burglar.

Canon Ernst Niggli, of Solothurn, died at the age of 47 at St. Moritz, where he had been recovering from an illness; he was curé at Grenchen for many years, and since 1912 a member of the Solothurn Grosse Rat.

Dr. Hermann Wartmann, a former secretary of the Kaufm. Direktorium, died in St. Gall at the age of 93; he is the author of a number of historical books, dealing chiefly with the early history of his canton.

## THE TWELFTH ANNUAL SWISS SAMPLES FAIR

will be held at

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13th to 23rd April, 1929.

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## THE FUTURE OF THE "SWISS OBSERVER."

Notification and Appeal to all Swiss Citizens  
in Great Britain and the Empire.

The urgent appeal of our Minister, Mr. Paravicini, in the "Swiss Observer," of the 2nd inst., to save this paper's useful existence, has not remained unheeded. At a meeting of some members of the Swiss Colony, most likely to take an immediate interest in the matter, convened and presided over by the Minister at the Swiss Legation, a plan has been worked out and a Directorate appointed for the taking over and continuance of the editorial and business management of the "Swiss Observer," as from the beginning of next month. After Mr. Boehringer had given an exact account of the position, financial and otherwise, of this weekly, and as everyone present agreed as a matter of course that its continued publication must be ensured, it was a comparatively simple matter to make the necessary provisional arrangements, thanks to the generous offers of active help which were forthcoming at the meeting.

As a first principle it was decided that all efforts should be bent on making the "Swiss Observer" self-supporting, an aim which, in Mr. Boehringer's opinion, should be fairly easily achieved if everybody who can help will do so. The best plan to attain this end, it was agreed, would be, firstly, to try to enrich the contents, and possibly reduce the price of the paper, so as to get a much larger circulation and more advertisement revenue. At Mr. Boehringer's suggestion, the meeting decided to divide the work of running the paper into four departments, viz.: editorial, advertising, circulation and finance, each department to be entrusted to different members of our Colony, so that each department could be run with closer and more continuous attention than hitherto at a comparatively modest sacrifice of time and effort by each collaborator. The gentlemen who have generously agreed to undertake the respective duties of the new management are:—

Editorial: Dr. H. W. Egli, Correspondent of the "Bund";

Financial and, for the present, advertising: Mr. G. E. De Brunner, Mr. A. F. Suter, and Mr. L. Chapuis; and

Circulation: Mr. J. H. Buchi.

Mr. J. Halperin, Correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung," and Mr. G. Popoff, Correspondent of the "Basler Nachrichten," have also kindly agreed to help the new Editor as far as lies in their power.

The problem that is most pressing at the present is the financial one, as Mr. Boehringer has for years been running the paper at a substantial loss, quite apart from the many hours he sacrificed week by week to the task of editing and publishing it. As a basis for the new management to start working on, Mr. Boehringer has offered to shoulder the deficit, as incurred hitherto, for another six months.

But as a new push by way of propaganda and enrichment of the contents of the "Swiss Observer" is considered desirable, an extra fund of a hundred pounds is needed. Two gentlemen who were present at the meeting have already promised to find half that amount, £25 from one of the Swiss societies as a token of gratitude for the services rendered by the "Swiss Observer," and another £25 through private subscription.

The new managerial directorate has undertaken its duties in the confident hope that the whole Swiss Colony in England and the other parts of the Empire will, on their part, do all they can to support this publication by:

Subscribing to it more widely;

Advertising in it more extensively;

Contributing to the propaganda-fund, and, last not least, by

Sending in contributions for the editorial columns in the shape of society-reports and social news, but also, as a new feature, thoughtful articles to be published as leaders, signed or unsigned, according to the wish of the contributor.

At present no payment for such contributions can be offered. The reward will be, as it is for the founder of the paper, the new management and all the subscribers and contributors in kind, that the "Swiss Observer" will continue its useful existence with substantially enriched contents. The "Home News" column will be much extended, containing, apart from the Federal news in English, local news from the various parts of the country in their respective languages, thanks to the help of various gentlemen, who have promised to send in regularly news-cuttings from their local Swiss papers. It is hoped to provide, apart from the usual features, frequent leading articles on any topic of special interest to the Swiss. It is further hoped to get members of the Swiss Colonies in the North of England and in other parts of the Empire to send in regularly news of their doings.

The continuance of the "Swiss Observer" depends on a prompt and sufficient response being forthcoming to this appeal for contributions to the special propaganda fund, for regular subscriptions, more advertisements and textual contributions, all to be sent to the old address: The "Swiss Observer," 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. The aim is well worth a special effort on the part of every reader.

## EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

### L'affaire Salvemini au Grand Conseil tessinois.

Au cours de la séance de lundi au Grand Conseil tessinois, M. Canevascini, conseiller d'Etat, a répondu au nom du gouvernement à l'interpellation de M. Francesco Borella (socialiste) sur l'affaire Salvemini. Le Conseil d'Etat déclaré que l'école tessinoise de culture italienne est placée sous la surveillance directe des autorités cantonales, qui ont la compétence de choisir les instituteurs et les conférenciers. Dès cette année, le produit du fonds Manzoni ne sera plus versé à cette école, aux besoins de laquelle on subviendra par des subsides cantonaux et fédéraux.

En ce qui concerne l'affaire Salvemini, le Conseil d'Etat affirme qu'il n'a pas été tenu au courant. S'il avait été interpellé, il aurait fait le nécessaire pour que la suggestion du Département de l'instruction publique d'inviter le professeur Salvemini soit acceptée et que la conférence soit organisée.

Le Conseil d'Etat est fermement décidé à empêcher que dans une école publique on fasse de la propagande en faveur de telle ou telle tendance; d'autre part, on ne peut pas exclure d'une école un homme de science uniquement parce qu'il combat le régime de son pays.

Le gouvernement tessinois insistera auprès du Conseil fédéral pour que la question soit examinée à nouveau et que l'interdiction prise à l'égard du professeur Salvemini soit levée.

Les manifestations qui ont eu lieu ces derniers jours dans le canton sont une preuve de l'attachement des citoyens à la liberté et à l'indépendance politique et spirituelle de notre pays, mais ces manifestations doivent maintenant cesser. La réponse du Conseil d'Etat se termine par ces mots: "Le seul moyen pour obtenir ce que l'on veut est le retour au calme des esprits. Le peuple du Tessin, jaloux de ses traditions d'hospitalité, ne mérite pas qu'on lui fasse l'offense de ne pas savoir accueillir avec la même déférence et le même respect les représentants de tendances politiques et scientifiques différentes ou opposées."

M. Borella s'est déclaré complètement satisfait; il a fait cependant quelques réserves en ce qui concerne l'invitation à cesser la manifestation organisée par l'Association Romeo Manzoni.

—Journal de Genève.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

### Much Ado About Nothing.

We reproduce a leader which appeared in the *Daily Mail* (February 13th) under the heading of a "Diplomat's Strange Action."

"We publish to-day a letter written by the Commercial Secretary of the Swiss Legation in London which requires the attention of the British Government. The object of the letter is to stir up resistance to the British demand for a safeguarding inquiry preliminary to the imposition of duties on imported handkerchiefs and household goods of linen, cotton, or hemp. The Commercial Secretary is anxious for the maintenance of what he calls 'free imports' here.

Switzerland is a country with which the British people have for more than a century had relations of the most intimate friendship. But for a Swiss diplomat thus to interfere in British internal affairs, and thus to strive to prevent the British people from doing for their industry what Switzerland has done already for her own appears to us to be a breach of international etiquette.

It is an act which should not for a moment be overlooked; or we shall find other Governments interfering in the same way at every turn. In the immediate future safeguarding of British industries will loom larger and larger every year.

Such intervention by the Swiss official is the more intolerable because Switzerland herself imposes heavy duties on British linen manufactures. We do not blame the Swiss people for that; but they would do well to reflect that

what they have found peculiarly beneficial for their workers would as certainly be beneficial for our workers. Switzerland levies on British linen imported into her territory a duty of from 4s. 9d. to 10s. a hundredweight in the case of yarn and from 12s. to £4 in the case of linen fabrics, according to quality. We at present levy no duty at all.

Exposed to the full force of foreign competition, with no home market reserved to it and paying taxes three to four times as heavy as those abroad, our British industry is in peril of dying. *Our linen plant is now working at only 15 per cent. of its capacity.* Our export of linen cloth has fallen from 244,000,000 square yards in 1912 to 66,000,000 last year. Failing safeguarding (and that quickly), the outlook is hopeless; and a new multitude of unemployed will be added here to the miners and cotton spinners and weavers who are on the dole or starving.

*We are going to be masters in our own house.* We are going to settle these vast issues on which the whole future of our workers depends ourselves.

The letter, dated January 19 and written on Legation notepaper, reads:

'I understand that you represent in Great Britain the firm of Jacob Gut, jr., . . . of Zurich, manufacturers of handkerchiefs and household linen.

As you are no doubt aware, the Handkerchiefs and Embroidery Association have lodged with the Board of Trade a request tending to the appointment of an inquiry committee under the Safeguarding of Industries procedure for the imposition of a duty upon handkerchiefs, household goods of linen, cotton, jute, or hemp.

I think it therefore opportune to bring to your knowledge that a committee is likely to be organised in order to procure counter evidence in favour of the maintenance of free imports.

Should the matter interest you I would suggest your getting into touch with Mr. Frank Challis, London Chamber of Commerce, 97, Cannon-street, E.C.4.'

This queer piece of diplomacy was followed by another letter from the Legation which confirmed the previous information, but added that a letter to Mr. Challis would have to be marked 'private.'

Any similar action by British diplomatic representatives abroad would be repudiated and draw the censure of the Foreign Office upon the official concerned.

A number of M.P.'s are considering whether they shall raise the matter in the House of Commons."

The matter referred to takes us back to what happened about a year ago, and it would be interesting to learn why it has taken our contemporary twelve months to secure such an "important piece of news" and how it reached its editorial offices. To the unbiased reader the matter is as simple and unadorned as A B C. There can be no two opinions about the duties of a commercial attaché: they consist in fostering and developing the commercial relations between the two countries concerned. In this instance there was a possibility of a certain branch of our export trade suffering a set-back, and our commercial attaché would have failed in his duty had he not drawn the attention of the interested parties to this development; he left it to them to do whatever they thought fit. Whether any opposition offered by foreign manufacturers to the imposition of an import duty would have the slightest influence on the decisions of the respective safeguarding committees we need not dwell upon—we should say it would (and should) have the reverse effect. It is most unfortunate that in this particular instance the interests of England and Switzerland have clashed and that the perfectly proper and legitimate steps undertaken by our commercial attaché should thereby be exposed to unfavourable criticism. We do not know whether the writing of letters is part of the routine observed in such cases, but the reference in the "follow-up" must strike anybody as queer. Dr. Rezzonico is greatly respected and extremely popular in the Swiss colony; he mixes freely with all, and delicate information of this nature could be imparted without giving an opportunity for uncomplimentary interpretation and thus offending our English friends.

Another article in the *Daily Mail* of February 14th further exaggerates the incident and refers to "Aliens Meddling in English Affairs." It states that the matter will be raised in the House of Commons, but we should think that wiser counsels will prevail and that the incident has by now been reduced to its proper proportions.

In the meantime M. J. Borsinger, our Chargé d'Affaires, called at the Foreign Office, and his visit is referred to as follows in *The Times* (Feb. 15th):—

"His visit is understood to have been made in connexion with the attention that has recently been drawn to the action of the Commercial Counsellor of the Legation in having written, over a year ago, to the London repre-

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sentatives of a Swiss exporting firm, suggesting that they should get into touch with a committee that was then being formed to present evidence against the imposition by the British Government of a duty upon handkerchiefs and household linen under the Safeguarding of Industries Act. The letter is understood to have been written in response to an appeal for support against the proposed new duties by the Swiss firms concerned. It was dated January, 1928.

It will be remembered that the inquiry was held in the early part of last year, and resulted in the rejection of the appeal that had been made for the safeguarding of handkerchiefs and household linen goods. The report on the subject was issued in May, 1928."

It is also interesting to read a reference made by Sir Hamar Greenwood, M.P., at a recent function as reported by *The Times* in the same issue. The italics are ours.

"Sir Hamar Greenwood, M.P., speaking at the annual dinner of the Electrical Wholesalers' Federation at the Savoy Hotel last night, referred to the incident in which, he said, the Commercial Attaché of the Swiss Legation in London wrote a letter to a Swiss importer telling him to write privately to the secretary of the London Chamber of Commerce, stating that it was up to him (the Swiss importer) to help the Chamber of Commerce to defeat the intention of His Majesty's Government to have an inquiry whether or not imported linen should be safeguarded.

'I say not a word against the Swiss Legation,' Sir Hamar Greenwood said. 'That zealous gentleman was acting in the interest of his country; but what about the London Chamber of Commerce? You know as well as I do we are in agreement with other countries in the world, but how much stronger would our position be if, like other countries, we had more home markets. I have always found that they treat England as part of their home market, and we are by that amount the weaker in making terms for all of us. Therefore I am one of those who believe first that it is not the duty of the Swiss Legation to interfere with what is done in inquiries in His Majesty's Realm, and secondly, that the London Chamber of Commerce might be more profitably employed in seeking to find more employment in England instead of less.'"

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### QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES

BONDS.		Feb. 12	Feb. 18	
Confederation 3% 1903	...	82.75	82.75	
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	...	103.00	102.70	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K	...	88.40	88.15	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	...	102.25	102.50	
SHARES.		Nom.	Feb. 12	Feb. 18
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	Frs. 500	Frs. 894	Frs. 891
Crédit Suisse	...	500	997	967
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	753	750
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	3490	3425
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	4650	4650
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	...	1000	4410	4395
S.A. Brown Boveri	...	350	614	607
C. P. Bally	...	1000	1510	1505
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	916	913
Entreprises Suisses	...	1000	1290	1287
Comp. de Navig. n. sur le Lac Léman	...	500	515	518
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	...	100	336	334
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	...	500	840	833

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