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HOME NEWS

The fanatical and supremely ridiculous onslaught made by the fascist Mussolini in the Italian Chamber against our Canton Tessin in particular and directed against Switzerland in general, has raised disgust and wholesale condemnation in the Tessin and throughout Switzerland.

Mussolini said that in the Speech from the Throne it is stated that Italy had now reached her alpine frontiers. It should, however, be pointed out that one hour from Milan German penetration, which had already been active before and during the war, had again started in a most threatening manner. A degenerate and Germanised Canton Tessin gives rise to most serious apprehension regarding the safety of Lombardy and the whole of Northern Italy. Several young Ticinese had already pointed to these dangers, and if the Gotthard as a natural and secure frontier of Italy must remain one of our aspirations, we ask the Government to at least secure possession of the Brenner and the Neveso.

Unfortunately we have not sufficient space at our command to reprint here the spirited refutation of Mussolini's aggressive attack, as it finds expression in strong protests by Ticinese official and public bodies to the Federal Government, in the Ticinese press as well as in the entire Swiss press.

The Italian paper "Secolo" in a leader says:—

"We would recommend to our Swiss friends not to excite themselves unduly. The interpellation in the Federal Council by the Ticinese deputies, the remarks from the Federal Councillor Motta and the action of the Swiss Minister in Rome, Wagnière, prove that extraordinary importance is attached to this rhetorical attack, but there is no reason to be perturbed and confused through such trifles."

Other Italian journals also condemn Mussolini's attack and it is a further redeeming feature to note that the Italian Prime Minister, Giolitti, requested Mussolini at the close of the discussion on the King's Speech a few days later, not to speak of Ticinese irredentism and reminded him and the Chamber that Switzerland's political mission is an essential part of the peace policy in Europe. Without the Swiss policy the war would have been far more brutal and bloodier. Italy can only wish that the powerful and highly cultured Swiss people will continue to maintain their historic traditions.

The combined National and State Councils have by a large majority elected M. Robert Fazy of Geneva as judge of the Federal Supreme Court, in place of the late Judge Picot.

Hailed by a salute of guns, the steamer "Vom Stave" arrived in Basle from Strasbourg in the evening of June 16th. On board were the International Rhine Commission,

composed of delegates of the Governments of Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy and Switzerland. The members were entertained at an official banquet, at which the Swiss Federal Council was represented by Messrs. Motta and Chuard.

On June 19th the voters of the Canton of Geneva rejected the proposition initiated by the Socialist Party for the establishment of an "Office cantonal du logement," which should have exercised strict control and fixed all rents.

The trading account of the Union of Swiss Co-operative Societies (Konsumvereine) for the year 1920 shows a turnover of 172 million francs and a net profit of frs. 345,210.

The wood-working industries of the Grisons are petitioning the Federal Council to prohibit the imports of wood until the very considerable home stocks have been disposed of.

The 3rd Exhibition of the Schweizerische Gastwirts-gewerbe was opened on June 17th in the buildings of the Basle Fair. In the evening the première was given of an elaborate historical review, assisted by several hundred performers and specially written by Mr. N. C. G. Bischoff, whom many of our readers will remember from his recent stay in the Swiss Colony of London.

The Federal Supreme Court has rejected as unconstitutional a law promulgated by the canton of St. Gall, which intended to prevent married women from holding licences for the sale of alcohol.

A strike to enforce increased salaries has broken out on most of the private railways of the Bernese Oberland.

Giving way to representations of business and industrial circles, the Federal Council intends to postpone for a year the collection of the extraordinary War Tax.

The fiscal year of the canton of Solothurn closes with a deficit of frs. 769,161, that of the canton of Aargau with a deficit of 3.8 million francs, whilst that of the town of Aarau shows a surplus of frs. 230,000. The municipal accounts of Berne also show a surplus amounting to frs. 462,000.

A party of about twenty medical experts from England are at present staying in Switzerland on a professional tour.

Where compliments are flying!

The "Basler Nachrichten" report that the peaceful deliberations of the Basler Grosse Rat were rudely disturbed on June 23rd by the following incident:

Der Präsident erteilt das Wort dem kommunistischen Sprecher M. Mäglin, der ebenfalls Nichttreten beantragt. Da lenkt ein Zwischenfall die Aufmerksamkeit des Rates ab. Dr. A. H. Wieland lib.), der hinter Baumgartner sitzt, hatte sich nach Schluss der Rede mit diesem auseinandergesetzt und nannte Baumgartner "Hanswurst." Baumgartner wendet sich gegen Wieland und titulierte ihn "Esel." Wieland wischt Baumgartner mit dem Handrücken einen Schlag aus. Allgemeine Unruhe. Rufe, wie "Wieland hat geschlagen!" werden laut. Baumgartner und Dr. Wieland stehen sich in drohender Haltung gegenüber. Baumgartner: "Du bisch e Schnuderbueb! I schloh der der Zwicker in d'Schnurt!" Tumult. Präsident Ronus setzt längere Zeit die Glocke in Bewegung. Die Unruhe dauert an. Dr. Ronus mahnt wiederholt zur Ruhe. Rufe: "Wieland soll hinaus!"

Präsident Ronus: "Es wird behauptet, Herr Dr. Wieland habe geschlagen. Wer das beobachtet hat, möge es melden." Mehrere Ratsmitglieder, voran Dr. Welti, treten zum Präsidentenpult. Dr. Wieland nähert sich ebenfalls. Dr. Ronus: "Ist es richtig, dass Sie geschlagen haben?" Dr. Wieland: "Ja." Dr. Ronus: "Ich rufe Sie ernstlich zur Ordnung." Der Präsident und Dr. Wieland wechseln einige Worte, während die Unruhe und Erregung weiter andauert. Präsident Ronus: "Dr. Wieland anerkennt, dass er zu weit gegangen ist. Wir fahren fort. Herr Mäglin hat das Wort."

Mäglin: "Ich fahre erst fort, wenn der Vertreter der Fascisten den Saal verlassen hat. Der Präsident hat das Recht, Personen aus dem Saal zu verweisen."

Unter andauernder Unruhe verlangt Grieder (soz.), dass die Verlegung des Werkhofes auf die Traktandenliste der nächsten Sitzung genommen werde. Der Rat stimmt mit grossem Mehr zu. Präsident Ronus schliesst um 6 Uhr 10 die Sitzung.

* * *

A novel way of dealing with a bull that did not feel quite up to the mark has been tried in the little village of Gresgen: the high-tension current was employed to apply electric treatment to the poor animal. Fortunately the bull stood on dry ground, otherwise the overdose might have cured his ills for ever and anon. A prosecution for cruelty to animals will now cost the would-be "vet." considerably more than the fee for proper and qualified treatment would have amounted to.

We hear that, at the Championships of the Inter-Banks Athletic Association, the Swiss Bank Club achieved another success in winning the tug-of-war event for the second year in succession. Of the team of six which pulled for the Swiss Bank Club at the Inter-Banks Championship, five members had pulled for that team at the Swiss Sports meeting.

LAWN TENNIS. — Swiss gentleman, experienced player, would be glad to meet Swiss players, or to receive introduction to Lawn Tennis Club. Please address replies to "Tennis," c/o. The Editor, "Swiss Observer," 21, Garlick Hill, E.C.4.

The Editor wishes to draw the attention of his readers to the welcome news that genuine Basler Leckerli and other specialities of the house of Singer in Basle can now be obtained direct in London. (See advert. page 141.)

Our office boy has had the pleasure of tasting a few of these dainties, and, like Oliver Twist, he keeps on asking for more.

UN MARECHALL SUISSE.

Par Mme. DAVID PERRET.

Dans son numéro du 13 Avril, la "Revue" constate qu'après les chevaliers posthumes de la Légion d'Honneur, voici maintenant les maréchaux posthumes.

Le roi de France Louis XIV nomma Maréchal de France un Suisse Jean-Louis d'Erlach-Castelen de Berne. D'Erlach ne le sut jamais; malade à Brisach où il mourut le 26 Janvier 1650, le bâton de maréchal ne lui parvint que pour décorer son tombeau.

Jean-Louis d'Erlach, Lieutenant-Général au service de France, avait par son intervention avec son corps de troupes, décidé de la victoire à la bataille de Lens. Condé le présenta au roi de France avec ces mots: "Voici, Sire, l'homme à qui vous devez la victoire de Lens." A cette époque déjà, Mazarin lui avait promis le bâton de maréchal; étranger et protestant, d'Erlach fut laissé de côté lors de la promotion. Il ne continua pas moins à servir le roi avec désintéressement et fidélité.

Le plus éclatant des services qu'il rendit à la France fut de lui conserver une armée lorsque, prenant en mains le commandement de l'armée d'Allemagne en place du Maréchal Turenne, suspect de sympathie envers la Fronde, il réussit à maintenir dans le devoir toutes les garnisons du Rhin, déjà ébranlées par Turenne et prêtes à se soulever.

Quand les troupes placées sous ses ordres, composées de Suédois, d'Allemands, d'Anglais, de Français, et de Suisses dont une compagnie de cavalerie du Capitaine de Bonstetten, deux compagnies d'infanterie de Diesbach, une de Halwyl de Berne, n'étant pas payées, menaçaient de s'ameurer, d'Erlach ne pouvant rien obtenir de Mazarin, paya de sa poche, engageant tout ce qu'il possédait. L'armée manquait de tout, les hommes commençaient à se mutiner; d'Erlach, terrassé par la maladie, fut relevé de son commandement et rentra à Brisach. Chargé par le roi d'assister comme premier plénipotentiaire de la France aux conférences internationales de Nuremberg en Septembre 1649, d'Erlach ne put s'y rendre, sa maladie faisant de rapides progrès.

Le Capitaine P. de Vallière, dans son livre "Honneur et Fidélité," où ces détails ont été puisés, ajoute: "La vie de d'Erlach ne s'écarta jamais de la ligne tracée par le devoir et par l'honneur, elle laisse entrevoir la beauté d'une âme parvenue à trouver le repos dans le sacrifice de toutes ses ambitions. Il avait au plus haut degré le sentiment du devoir. Il resta inébranlable dans ses convictions, alors qu'en changeant de religion, il eût pu parvenir au faite des honneurs; il fut fidèle à sa parole au moment où, autour de lui, les plus grands hommes abandonnaient leur roi. Il aimait ses soldats et s'ingéniait à adoucir leurs misères. Son désintéressement faillit le ruiner."

Comment, lorsque tombé malade au service du roi de France, ce vaillant et fidèle soldat obtint-il enfin la distinction suprême qui lui fut accordée lorsqu'il avait cessé de vivre?

Elle ne devait rien ajouter à la noblesse de sa vie qui, selon le Capitaine de Vallière, peut se résumer en ces deux mots du serment des Suisses: "Honneur et Fidélité."

ORON-LA-VILLE.

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