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dominant, is the most Conservative canton, and is more aloof than the rest from the Federal Government. Sometimes the laws of adjacent cantons are in conflict, and curious situations arise. One canton may have abolished the death penalty, while its neighbour retains it. A postal employee, in charge of considerable moneys, was murdered in a tunnel between the cantons of Geneva and Fribourg. After the murderer had been convicted, it remained to be determined in which canton the deed had been done. The tests were elaborate. Measurements of the tunnel were taken, a train was run through it, and a stop watch used. It was concluded that the murder was committed before Fribourg had been passed, and the unhappy man was executed. Had the deed been done in the other part of the tunnel, he would have been imprisoned for life, according to Geneva law.

"There is a general impression that the Swiss are a highly moral people. Is this so?"

"It is so. Yet I may appear to contradict the statement when I say that divorce is two and a half times more frequent here than in England, though not as frequent as in America. Divorce can be had for incompatibility of temperament. I am not sure whether this is federal or cantonal law, but if there is an exception it will be Fribourg, the great Catholic canton. When I say that divorce may be had because of incompatibility, I do not mean that it is easy to get. The incompatibility must be proved. Two people who have failed to live agreeably together may apply, but if they do not satisfy the Court they will be sent back again to try another year before getting the relief they seek. But I repeat the Swiss are very moral. The undesirable women who are found in the larger towns of Europe are practically unknown in Switzerland. This fact should have some effect on the minds of people who resist any change in ancient divorce laws."

"And now, most important of all, what of the religious situation? I see that the official figures are forty-one per cent. Roman Catholic, fifty-eight per cent. Protestant, and one per cent. other religions."

"I do not give much credence to the statistics. The figures may amount to this, that forty-one per cent. of the population has definitely returned itself as Roman Catholic, one per cent. claims communion with sects that are neither Protestant nor Catholic. The rest of the people have been officially rated Protestant, just as in the English Army men who adhere to no Church are labelled 'Church of England.' Catholicism has a very firm hold on its people. No Catholic guide is willing to begin a climb on a Saturday afternoon lest he miss Mass on Sunday morning. He will not object to set out after Mass. An extreme case of this sort is connected with Whymper's terrible experience on the Matterhorn. On his return to Zermatt, he set out again the next morning, a Sunday, to recover the bodies of his friends. The local curé threatened with excommunication any guide who neglected Mass in order to attend the search party. One guide, with tears in his eyes, declared that nothing else would have prevented his joining the search party."

"You think, then, that the outlook for Protestantism in Switzerland is not very bright?"

"Protestantism, as we have known it in Switzerland, is moribund. You may be startled to hear this of the stronghold of Protestantism—the land where Calvin and Zwingli held sway. My judgment is not based on the statistics. You must not consider me an authority on statistics."

"Have you considered the causes of Protestantism's declining influence?"

"I offer two reasons. Swiss Protestantism is either Calvinistic or Zwinglian. Calvinism as Calvin taught it is a gloomy and revolting creed, insulting alike to the Deity and to common sense. The doctrine of predestination is no longer preached with the old vigour, but is difficult for the Calvinists to escape from the shadow of the grim Genevese. Modern Calvinism is divorced from beauty, and also from the beauty of the Christian faith, which it resembles only superficially. Both the Calvinistic and Zwinglian branches of Swiss Protestantism are settling more and more into a hard modernism. Religions which water down the supernatural, which reject all beauty, and which are divorced from the historic sense of the continuity of Christianity, are heavily handicapped in the fight against Rome."

"Please understand that I do not pose as an expert on Swiss religious life. I am giving you my own conclusions, which are based in the main on my conversations with my young Swiss friends. I know a great many young University men, but I do not know one who attends the Swiss Protestant Church. But I may be painting an unduly depressing picture."

World Population.

While in this country the addresses at the annual meeting of the British Association have provoked a furious word battle between scientists and the Church as to the respective claims of the jellyfish, the ape and the angel to the privilege of

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being the initial progenitor of our species, an international conference has commenced its deliberations at Geneva to settle the fate of the ever-increasing world population. We doubt whether the blunt statement of the New York professor as to the main causes operating in favour of a maximum world population will appeal to any responsible *paterfamilias*; the latter's mission evidently consists in supplying the sinews of war to satisfy the whims and fancies of ambitious politicians, or worse, to aggravate the unfortunate antagonism between the different religious sects. This is, of course, the old, old tale, and no improvement in the world's ethics and outlook seems to be anticipated by these philosophers, but we thought that the results of modern achievements made ample provision for this over-population: what railway, motoring and aviation accidents will not accomplish can safely be left to an occasional earthquake. According to American statistics, the annual toll of motoring accidents in that country approximately equals its total war casualties. From the report printed below from the *Daily News* (Sept. 1st) we also gather that according to a Harvard savant the human species is propagated at the same rate as flies and microbes!

The World Population Conference, which has obtained unexpected publicity through unfounded rumours that its object was the advocacy of birth control, opened in Geneva under the chairmanship of Sir Bernard Mallett.

About 200 scientists—biologists, statisticians, economists, ethnologists, sociologists, migration experts, etc.—were present from about 30 countries.

Sir Bernard Mallett explained that one of the most interesting theories to be discussed was that of "optimum population." The conference sought to bring into contact scientists specially interested in the investigation of factors which would determine the "optimum population" in various portions of the earth at different times.

The second object was to establish some permanent organisation for the purpose of watching developments of promoting and encouraging research and of calling future meetings.

The programme, Sir Bernard added, covered a range of questions on which acute differences existed both between individuals and between nations, and there had already been ominous signs that mischief-makers, or rather, sensation-mongers were at work. He appealed to the members to assist in checking irrelevant or irritating observations.

The discussions were unsatisfactory owing to the large number of delegates who wished to take part and the consequent necessity for a time-limit. The speakers who had prepared 10-minute speeches were required to compress them into three, and were unable properly to expound their views.

The general impression gained was of the opposition between the French and Anglo-Saxon points of view, the former considering that the general tendency of population was to decrease as civilisation advanced, and that man would always be able to produce enough to meet his needs, while the Anglo-Saxons took the view that the problem was of a more pressing character.

Main points from the papers read before the Conference are appended.

Professor H. P. Fairchild, of New York University, said there were five major causes operating in favour of a maximum world population.

Desire of the nations to maintain their military strength.

Desire of despotic rulers to have the largest possible number of subjects.

Religious zeal of various sects who desire to have the greatest number of followers.

Cultural desire of certain nations to dominate the world with their particular traits, and Sheer megalomania, which desires bigness for its own sake.

He insisted on the eventual necessity of limiting population.

Professor East, Harvard University:

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to solve the population question.

Doctor Raymond Pearl, of the Johns Hopkins University of America, advanced the theory that the growth of the human population follows exactly the same life curve as that of flies and microbes.

He said he had reached these conclusions after years of laboratory experiments, where, after establishing the life curve of flies and microbes, he compared them with the census returns of various countries, including England, Wales, Scotland, America, France, Italy, Japan and Australia, all of which showed that the population of these countries followed the same growth curve as that of flies and microbes.

The Chamonix Disaster.

Thanks to the prompt intervention of the Swiss Legation, most of the English dailies have corrected the telegraphic report which described this as a Swiss railway accident. We have also heard from several readers who have written in the same strain to their respective papers. "Geographisch-schwach," they used to say in our schooldays. We quote the letter sent by Mr. William Ellis and published in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (Aug. 29th):—

"Sir,—May I call your attention to a geographical error in your issue of Saturday morning, the last column of page 7, where you allude to the terrible disaster on "the mountain railway in Switzerland," and further on where you allude to the accident as "the greatest disaster in the history of Swiss mountain railways." May I point out to you that the accident occurred close to Chamonix, and Chamonix is in France and not in Switzerland. I allude to the point for, speaking as an engineer, I think it is wonderful the care which the Swiss engineers have exercised in the upkeep of their mountain railways, no serious accident having occurred on any of these very difficult railways. For instance, the conveying of the many thousands of tourists from Visp, in the Rhône Valley, to Zermatt, and then forward to Rifelalp and Gornergrat without, so far as I know, any loss of life, is a very wonderful engineering feat for which they deserve great credit. I have in mind the serious disaster which happened about 2½ years ago at Bellinzona, but this was on the main line and not on a mountain railway, and must, therefore, be regarded as one of the ordinary risks of main line traffic.

I notice in your leaderette on the same subject you allude to "the disaster in the French Alps."

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

	Aug. 30		Sept. 7	
	Frs.	S.	Frs.	S.
BONDS.				
Confederation 3% 1903	80.25		80.75	
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	101.50		101.40	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K	84.65		84.37	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	101.15		101.10	
SHARES.				
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	783	783	783
Crédit Suisse	500	847	855	855
Union de Banques Suisses	500	725	731	731
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2612	2645	2645
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	4250	4275	4275
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000	2825	2712	2712
S.A. Brown Boveri	350	551	544	544
C. F. Bally	1000	1249	1250	1250
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	720	757	757
Entreprises Sulzer S.A.	1000	1065	1077	1077
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	560	557	557
Linolenn A.G. Giubiasco	100	137	140	140
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	500	735	754	754

Third Class Bookings to Switzerland via Boulogne/Calais.

Third-class tickets, single and return, from London to Basle and to Zurich via Boulogne/Calais, are now obtainable on application to the Audit Accountant of the Southern Railway, Victoria Station. The fares to be charged for these tickets are as under:

	3rd Cl. Single		3rd Cl. Return	
	g	s	g	s
London - Basle	2	9	4	8
London - Zurich	2	15	4	17

EIDGENÖSSISCHE GLOSSEN.

Die armen Metzger.

Die Metzger tun mir leid. Bis dahin empfand ich Bewunderung, ja Neid, wenn ich sie behäbig und wohlgenährt als schönes Zeichen ihrer körperlichen Gedeihens unter den Türen ihrer auf Moderaste eingerichteten Lokale stehen oder am Steuer ihres Autos über Land fahren sah. Schon die gewöhnlichen Metzger gaben mir dieses Gefühl und erst die Gross-Metzger, nach amerikanischen Methoden arbeitend, ein Spinnennetz von Filialen übers Land ausbreitend! Und nun soll das auf einmal nicht wahr sein. Wie man sich täuschen kann! Denn diese Metzger verdienen ja in Wirklichkeit sozusagen rein nichts, das heisst, sie verdienen soviel wie ein Briefträger oder ein Tramangestellter, wenn sie Glück haben. Sie opfern sich ganz einfach auf, nicht mehr und nicht weniger. Sie arbeiten bloss aus Freude an ihrem Beruf, sie plagen sich, weil sie es als vaterländische Pflicht empfinden, ihre Mitbürger mit Fleisch zu versorgen. Das alles ergibt sich aus dem Jahresbericht des Verbandes Schweizerischer Metzgermeister.

Nun weiss ich: Die Bearbeitung von 180 Metzger-Buchhaltungen durch die Buchhaltungsstelle des Verbandes Schweizerischer Metzgermeister ergibt im Jahresdurchschnitt 1918—1924 bei Verzinsung des Eigenkapitals zu 5½ Prozent für Metzgereibetriebe mit einem Umsatz bis zu 250,000 Fr. einen Reingewinn von 1,21 Prozent, für Metzgereibetriebe bis zu 500,000 Fr. Umsatz einen solchen von 1,62 Prozent und für Betriebe mit einem Umsatz von über 500,000 Fr. einen Gewinn von 1,10 Prozent. (Die Grossbetriebe stehen also im Verhältnis zum Umsatz am schlechtesten da: sie bringen der Allgemeinheit das grösste Opfer!) Das heisst, dass ein Metzgermeister mit 200,000 Fr. Umsatz jährlich Fr. 2420, ein Metzgermeister mit 500,000 Fr. Umsatz jährlich 8100 Fr. und ein Metzgermeister mit 1,000,000 Fr. Umsatz 11,000 Fr. verdient. Aus diesen Reingewinnen muss aber, wie man mich belehrt, noch der Lohn für die Meistersleute und der übrigen im Geschäft tätigen Familienmitglieder, die Miete für das eigene Geschäft und die Abschreibungen auf Liegenschaften bestritten werden!

Die Metzger tun mir wirklich leid. Nur eine leise Hoffnung bleibt mir noch: Dass sich in den Buchhaltungen irgendwo ein Fehler eingeschlichen haben könnte...

Die verschmähten Bohnen.

Der Lebensmittelverein Zürich teilt mit, dass der Ertrag an Schmalzbohnen gegenwärtig so gross sei, dass sie vielerorts als Viehfutter verwendet werden müssen, weil die entsprechende Nachfrage fehle. Den Schweizern ist wirklich nicht zu helfen. Sie werden Gefrierfleisch verlangen, als dass sie sich dazu bequemen, die eigenen Bohnen zu essen, diese guten, schmackhaften, nahrhaften Bohnen zu 60 Cts. das Kilo. Es wäre ja auch viel zu einfach.

Noch etwas anderes sagt der Lebensmittelverein in seinem Rundschreiben an die Ablagehalterinnen: "Trotz dem billigen Preise steht die Nachfrage merkwürdigerweise heute in keinem Verhältnis zum Verbrauch an fremden Bohnen, als solche noch teurer waren." Wenn also daheim die Bohnen noch nicht reif sind, wenn sie als ausländisches Importgut teuer sind, dann ist der Schweizer Bohnen. Ein neuer Beweis dafür, dass eine Volkswirtschaft nicht nur von wirtschaftlichen Überlegungen abhängt, sondern auch von geistigem Unüberlegtem. Man will unbedingt einen Grund behalten, um sagen zu dürfen, dass das Leben teuer sei. Möge man die billigen Bohnen dem Vieh verfüttern. Die Hauptsache ist, dass man Bohnen isst, wenn es bei uns noch keine gibt. Dann schmecken sie, so gut wie man eine bei uns im Lagerraum zum Reifen gebrachte Banane, die die Tropensonne kaum gesehen hat, zwei Äpfeln vorzieht, die an der Schweizerzone wirklich und wahrhaftig gereift sind. Nur ja nicht das Selbstverständliche, Nabelliegende und Natürliche tun—dann ist man glücklich. Vielleicht könnte man den Absatz der Schmalzbohnen steigern, wenn man ihren Preis erhöhte und sagte, sie kämen aus der Südsee!

Eigene Eier.

Glücklicherweise steht es um die Hühner und Eier besser als um die Schmalzbohnen. Auch ihre Zahl ist gestiegen; doch immer noch genügt die eigene Produktion nicht. Sie hat zwar seit 1918 einen grossen Schritt vorwärts getan (siehe Ergebnisse der 3. Nutzgeflügelzählung). Einen volkswirtschaftlich sehr bedeutungsvollen Schritt. Die Zahl der Hühnerbesitzer ist in diesem Zeitraum um 15 Prozent auf 290,000 gestiegen. Die Zahl der Hühner um 70 Prozent auf 4,116,000. Also auf jeden Schweizer ein Huhn, auf hundert Tage im Jahre je eine Ei. Totaler Produktionsstoff der Schweiz. Geflügelhaltung (nach Abzug von 20 Prozent Anteil ausländischer Rohstoffe 60—65 Millionen Franken im Jahr (300 Millionen Eier, 28000 Zentner Schlachtgeflügel). So summiert sich die Arbeitsleistung von 290,000 Kleinbetrieben, wenn sie auch im Jahre 1926 einen Importwert von 40 Millionen noch nicht unnötig machen konnte.

Der Fingerzeig ist deutlich genug: Je rascher und entschiedener wir unsere Städte (oder solche, die es werden wollen) dank guter Verkehrsgelegenheiten und billiger Siedlungen aufs Land hinauslocken, um so besser für unsere Volkswirtschaft. Der eigene Hühnerhof ist dann eine Selbstverständlichkeit. In einem kleinen Garten wächst mehr als auf einer grossen Wiese. Und mit den eigenen Äpfeln und den eigenen Schmalzbohnen wird das Ernährungsleben auch wieder vernünftiger. Man ist dann wirklich, was man hat, und zwar mit Lust und Freude. Und ohne dass man recht daran denkt, leistet man einen kleinen Beitrag an die heimische Produktion, beteiligt man sich am Zustandekommen eines Bodenmehrertrages, der in die Millionen geht!

Felix Moeschlin in "N.Z."

THE SWISS "COMPTOIR" OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES.

The 8th Swiss Exhibition of food producing Industries and Agriculture will take place at Lausanne as usual from the 10th to the 25th September.

Its general arrangement will only slightly differ from those of last year: the two great classes of exhibits will, as before, form the main part of the exhibition. Nevertheless, certain groups will claim

special attention from those in charge of the exhibition. Among them is the hotel keeping industry with its side branches of work, which plays a great part in Switzerland; it will be given a good position in the main hall.

The scope of the exhibition will be greatly enlarged by the presence of the many products of agriculture and of food. The strictly scientific growth of agriculture in Switzerland is well known, no less known is the reputation of those industries which deal with food and drink. All the products of these two industries will be exhibited, namely chocolate, condensed milk, cheese, wine, preserves, etc. Side by side with the produce of fields, vineyards and orchards will be shown those of a series of industries which cater for agriculture and the food producing industries; for agriculture: agricultural machinery of all kinds, tools, manures, chemicals and drugs used for animals, building materials, etc.; for the food industries: machinery and apparatus used in the preparation of various foods, for cooking them and for preserving and packing.

In the agriculture section a separate area will be devoted to milk products.

It will comprise a scientific, statistical and advertising department of which the principal aim will be education. The public will see in this section everything which refers to milk production, such as the construction of the cow's udder, the secretion of milk, the diseases of the udder which render milk unfit for drinking or for industrial purposes, bacteria, the chemical composition of milk and of milk products. The department will be under the special care of the principal scientific laboratories and schools of Switzerland; it will comprise diagrams and tables which will explain the large part milk plays in Switzerland.

Besides the scientific and statistical department the dairy group will have a technical department comprising two parts. In the first part the principal manufacturers of Switzerland will exhibit all such machinery, apparatus and instruments as are used in dairy work, for instance, cans for boiling and transporting milk, cheese vats and presses, steam boilers, the best machinery for making butter by the most modern methods, cold storage chests and apparatus. In the second part a modern dairy will be working before the public, enabling them to understand the methods of producing the best results.

The Dairy Department will be completed by an exhibition of the main dairy products of Switzerland, principally hard cheeses like Emmenthal, Gruyère and Spalen, soft cheeses and specialities such as cheeses in boxes, condensed milk, etc.

In the agricultural department special attention will be paid to cattle, as cattle breeding plays such a great part in agriculture in Switzerland. Bred by modern scientific methods, it has justly acquired a great reputation in foreign countries; on many occasions Swiss bulls have been sent to remote countries to improve their local breed. During the first week of the "Comptoir Suisse" there will be an exhibition of cattle, during the second week an auction of bulls and calves. The cattle will be exhibited in a special enclosure, where every convenience will be afforded for their inspection. Besides this the public will gather a general impression of the high standard which cattle have attained in Switzerland.

The number of exhibitors at the "Comptoir Suisse" has always gone on increasing. This year it will be still greater than in 1926. —Brs.

J. H.'S Weekly Letter to his Friends and Compatriots.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—To learn, and to be informed on matters which are not already one's own intellectual possession is one of the finest things life can give us. So, I am sure, all the Swiss who have, at one time or another, been hunting after "Edelweiss" will rejoice over the discovery by a smart 'free lance' that Edelweiss can be grown on the roofs of hotels.

The *Swiss Observer* has done a great thing in bringing this discovery to the knowledge of its readers. It is not my intention to contest the truth of this scientific discovery, but, on the other hand, half a truth is no truth, and it remains my duty to add just a few words with regard to the nimbus with which the old "Edelweiss" has always been invested.

It is quite true that a flower as described by the above-mentioned journalist has its existence, but botanists got the silly idea into their heads that the Edelweiss, for which many a fine Bergkraxler has risked his life, belongs to a different family. I presume that all of you know that flowers do belong to families and clans.

Now, if this idea of the botanist is based on truth, then we cannot help but conclude that—well—our Edelweiss is not Edelweiss, but something else. One might also turn the thing round. That, however, would not be nice to the man who so nicely wrote about that old "Edelweiss-Nimbus."

Has it ever occurred to you how often the exile hears things of his home country which he never heard of before? As a matter of fact, one has to come to London to hear those things. The