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The Swiss Observer

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To All Our Readers
A
Prosperous New Year

HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

FEDERAL.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

Dr. H. Walther (Lucerne) has been appointed Chairman of the Board of the Swiss Federal Railways. Dr. Walther is a member of Parliament and has been on the Board for several years.

RESIGNATION OF FEDERAL JUDGE G. BERTA.

At the end of this year, M. Berta will retire from his post. G. Berta was born in 1870 at Giubiasco, and is the brother of the well-known Ticino painter Berta who recently died. He studied law at the Universities of Lausanne, Munich and Berne, and held the degree of doctor of law. He started his career at Bellinzona and for several years he held a post at the Federal Chancery in Berne. From 1899 to 1910 he was Professor of law at the Commercial University in St. Gallen. In 1911 he was appointed one of the Judges of the Appeal Court of the Canton of Ticino, where he remained until 1920. Since the foundation of the Federal Insurance Tribunal, he was a member of this Court, which he presided over for the last 4 years. He has presided over several International Tribunals settling disputes amongst the following countries: Italy-Germany, Italy-Austria, Italy-Hungary, Italy-Bulgaria. Dr. Berta was an eminent lawyer and an excellent Judge.

HUGE DAM CONSTRUCTION.

Switzerland is progressively exploiting its natural resources by the harnessing of its water power, and operations have now started on the new dam of the Dixence, near Sion, in the Rhone Valley.

The building of this dam involves the construction of a new road, a special railway line, a funicular and several aerial railways. A large artificial lake is to be formed at an altitude of 7,350ft. retained within a dam 500 yards long, 300ft. high and 220ft. thick at the base. Eight thousand car loads of cement will be used for its construction. To-day, nearly 1,800 men are employed.

The height of the waterfall will be approximately 5,250ft. and its output 200,000 h.p.

LOCAL.

ZÜRICH.

Colonel Edward Locher, a Partner of the firm Locher & Cie. Building contractors, has died at the age of 60.

LUCERNE.

M. Plazidus Meyer von Schauensee, a noted lawyer and judge died at Lucerne at the age of 82.

BASLE.

Prof. H. Kreis, formerly analytical chemist of the canton of Basle has died in Basle at the age of 70. Prof. Kreis retired from his post early last year.

SOLOTHURN.

The 450th Anniversary of the entry of the canton Solothurn into the Confederation was celebrated on the 23rd of last week. The guests

were received by the members of the Cantonal Government at the Town Hall. The Federal Council was represented by M. Häberlin, President of the Swiss Confederation and M. Musy; the Government of the canton Fribourg arrived in *corpore*, and different cantons sent delegations. The "Kantonsrat" held a solemn meeting, and in order to mark this important event, voted a credit of 50,000f. for the unemployed and an amount of 30,000f. as a Christmas present to be distributed amongst old people. M. Häberlin, President of the Swiss Confederation, made a speech which was received with great enthusiasm. The Socialist party abstained from participating in the festivities.

GENEVE.

Burglars broke into the shop of Messrs. Jaccard, Jewellers at Geneva, and stole jewellery to the value of 20,000f., the firm was not insured against burglary.

THURGAU.

The butchers of Romanshorn have decided to supply all unemployed with meat at a reduction of 20 per cent.

GRAUBÜNDEN.

The first section of the Davos Parsenn Cable Railway, which was opened recently, carries passengers up more than 2,200 feet in ten minutes to within easy reach of the Parsenn skiing region, thus making many runs and tours much more accessible to skiers. This first section, the construction of which was started in June last, comprises two tunnels, an iron bridge, and several stone viaducts. The second part, another 1,500 feet or so, will be completed next year, and some work has already been done on it. The modern all-steel cars are fitted with the newest devices, are comfortably heated and smooth-running, and are provided with automatic brakes, which would come into action at once if the cable should snap. The section now open leads to the "middle" station, at which, when the whole line is complete, passengers will change cars for the last bit. This middle station is situated just below the Höhenweg, a picturesque pathway running along the mountain-side 2,000 feet above Davos; and the terminus of the final section will be the Weissfluh Joch, where a new restaurant has already been built in readiness. The first section deals with the steepest part of the climb, and skiers will find no great difficulty this winter in reaching the starting points of the various runs.

* * *

A fire completely destroyed the Hotel Seehof, at Lenzerheide. This Hotel was only opened in 1930.

SCHAFFHAUSEN.

The Brick Works Thayngen A. G. at Tayngen were destroyed by fire last Sunday, the damage caused is estimated to be about 500,000f.

LOCARNO.

On Christmas day the prison authorities hoisted the white flag, a sign that the prison was devoid of any "pensioners," this is the first Christmas for the last 10 years that the authorities were able to close down.

VAUD.

A Christmas Eve tragedy has aroused great emotion in the little village of Froideville. It caused the death of a gendarme named Arthur Genier, aged 43, the father of four children, who were preparing to spend the evening round their Christmas tree.

An Italian mason in the village threatened to shoot his wife, but she escaped from the house and reported at the police-station. On the gendarme going to the house, the Italian opened the door and fired. The gendarme fell mortally wounded. For three hours he lay on the floor bleeding to death, as the Italian kept up a continuous fire so that no one dare approach. Eventually the gendarme was taken to hospital, where he died.

A regular siege ensued by the force of twenty police, headed by a magistrate and armed with tear-gas pistols. The Italian continued to fire in all directions, and it was not until midnight that the house could be entered. He was then found dead, having fired a shot through his head.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

1931

Ein sonnenloser Tag will leis zerrinnen,
Mir ist, als schaut ich ihn, ein blosses Weib.
Das sich mit silberzarten Nebelfächern
Verhüllt den weissen, schemenhaften Leib.
Ein Weib, das sich mit zögernder Gebärde,
Die auflebt und verflackert und verweht,
Den schmalen Weg durch stille Stunden tastet
Und Schritt für Schritt auf grauem Grunde geht,

Das ab und zu nur wie in müdem Traume
Die geisterbasse Hand zum Herzen hebt,
Allwo das feine, bläuliche Geäder,
Wie unter Wellenschlägen leise bett.

(Marie Bretscher).

1932

Ein neuer Morgen will sein Antlitz heben,
Noch steht er wie verkettet auf der Schwelle,
Doch leise schon zur Stirne steigt die Welle
Des roten Blutes, und die Lider heben.

Die Arme aus den mächtigen Schlingen streben
Empor, empor! Aufrauscht des Lichtes Quelle
Und steigt und stürzt in strömendem Gefälle,
Treibt tief zum Grund jedwedes Dämmerweben.

Hoch über weisse Firnen geht sein Schreiten,
Und seine Augen fassen alle Weiten,
Und mählich, mit der Stunden fernem Schlag
Steigt er hinauf zum steilsten Felsenrande
Und neigt sich vor der Sonne mächtigem Brande
Und schwingt sich jubelnd in den hohen Tag.

(Marie Bretscher).

Elena Lunghi in "Un Articolò?" in our issue of the 12th December, 1931, opined that the Public sees and reads too much, and that, therefore, it is rather difficult to find something to tell it.

This being the end of the old and the beginning of the New Year, when New-Year's resolutions are being made and broken, I might, perhaps, appeal to our Readers to adopt yet one more of those Resolutions, to wit: Let's beware ourselves of reading headlines only!

Being one of those inquisitive persons who are never quite happy unless they know the "wherefore" of any problem or phenomenon that comes their way, I often find it extremely difficult to get my friends to substantiate their assertions and I find, time after time, that what they are telling me is merely a jumble of headlines they have glanced at during breakfast time or in the morning train and on which they have then not formed, but adopted their so-called opinions. It is most aggravating, this head-line-business, because it robs otherwise quite rational men and also women of their power of thought, of concentration, of memory and you will find that those people who are afflicted by this head-line disease, do not remember from one day to the next what they have read. Hence the ease with which the yellow press influences its public. Hence the muddled outlook on anything political, economical, etc., which you find amongst the masses. Hence the *Ill-Will* that can be produced in the twinkling of an eye by the Stunt-Newspapers.

And, to my mind, it is this *Ill-Will*, largely if not quite, an artificial product, which lies at the bottom of our present-day crisis, political and economical.

At heart, and when they are free from the poisonous dope given them daily at breakfast-time by the yellow press, not only of this country, but of all countries, these people are quite good fellows. Ask any one of them and he will tell you that he quite agrees that the nationals of any given country are quite decent chappies, and that he, personally, certainly wishes them no harm and fully realises that the human family can improve its present-day standard of living only by all pulling together and working and playing together and observing the rules of the game. Etc., etc.

Well then, and as I do not wish to outline my case further, but only to draw attention to it, I think that if we made an honest effort to read not only the headlines, but the articles below them, we would find either that the article below them does not bear out what the headline suggests, or that the whole matter is relatively unimportant and certainly not worth making a fuss about. Besides, we shall find that in a great many cases the assertions are disproved next day, or withdrawn or otherwise toned down. But, in order to find out these happenings we must take the trouble to read the whole article. Otherwise, we