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Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1922)**

Heft 41

PDF erstellt am: **01.05.2024**

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The Swiss Observer

Telegrams : FREPRINCÓ, LONDON.

Published weekly at
21, GARLICK HILL, E.C. 4.

Telephone : CITY 4603.

No. 41

LONDON, MARCH 18, 1922.

PRICE 3D.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postscheck-Konto: Basle V 5718).

HOME NEWS

On Monday, March 20th, the National Councillors and the Councillors of State will re-assemble in Berne for the ordinary Spring Session.

* * *

The Federal Council have appointed two of their members, Messrs. Motta and Schulthess, to represent Switzerland at the Genoa Conference.

In view of the fact that most of the other States will be represented by Ministers, the Federal Council have considered it necessary to ignore for this particular occasion the traditional rule that Federal Councillors should not be delegated to conferences which take place outside Switzerland.

National Councillor Alfred Frey, President of the Swiss Association for Commerce and Industry, and M. Léopold Dubois, member of the Administrative Council of the Swiss Bankverein, Basle, will accompany Messrs. Motta and Schulthess as experts.

* * *

Swiss import duties for the past month of February produced 11,327,249 frs. against 7,469,760 frs. for the same month of the preceding year.

The total customs revenue for January and February, 1922, amounted to 23 million francs against 13 millions for the same months in 1921.

* * *

The population of Berne numbered 103,748 at the end of 1921, against 124,295 in 1920.

The number of inhabitants of the town of Zurich has also decreased, though not so considerably as that of the Federal town. Zurich has to-day 200,873 inhabitants, i.e., 5,400 less than in December, 1920.

* * *

After a week's unrestrained Carnival revelry Zurich and its suburbs are gradually returning to sober every-day life.

The Zurich press severely criticise the behaviour of some of the revellers, whose undignified and often rude excesses demand in future decided and rigorous intervention by the police authorities if the Zurich Carnival festivities are not to degenerate into unbridled and offensive demonstrations which have little in common with the real Carnival spirit, and compare very unfavourably with the decorum observed in other Swiss towns during Carnival season.

The following are some tragic echoes of the Carnival: Returning home in the early hours of the morning from a masquerade ball, a young lady, Martha Markwalder, of Zurich, was later found dead in bed shot through her head.

From statements made to the police by the mother of the dead girl it was assumed that the crime must have been committed by one of the two male companions who had escorted the girl home.

Closer investigations, however, proved that the girl's own mother must be implicated in the crime, and, on being pressed by the police, she confessed to the crime, stating that she was driven to exasperation by her daughter's staying out all night on repeated occasions. —

The Zurich police had on several occasions during the Carnival week to rescue from drowning masqueraders who, while in a state of intoxication, had fallen into the River Sihl. —

Another young reveller, whose early morning escapades culminated in his climbing up the front of a house and giving a gymnastic display on the railings of a balcony, lost his footing and fell to the pavement, smashing his skull. A lifeless body, in fancy dress, was all his comrades could convey home to the parents of the young man.

* * *

With a view to furthering commercial relations between Switzerland and Holland, the Colonial Institute of the Netherlands will arrange an exhibition of Colonial products in Basle during the coming month of April.

The patronage of the Dutch Government has been secured for the exhibition.

* * *

After having served eight years of a life sentence passed upon him on purely circumstantial evidence for the murder of a little girl, a gardener named Buchholz obtained a new trial on the ground of fresh facts having come to light, and has now been acquitted by the Court of Liestal.

* * *

August Heer, the Swiss sculptor, has died at the age of 55 at Arlesheim near Basle. Heer's talent won him many prizes and commissions to execute sculptures and reliefs for public buildings, such as the Federal Palace at Berne, the Basle Central Station, the National Bank at Basle, etc., etc.

* * *

In our issue of March 4th we referred to the first meeting of the Swiss Marconi Company in Berne on February 23rd.

By the courtesy of Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co., Ltd., we are in the position to publish the contents of two letters addressed from the London headquarters to the assembly in Berne; letters which our readers will doubtless also read with interest and satisfaction:—